



# HOMESTRETCH PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION

Qualifying individuals and families purchasing a home in Gwinnett County may be eligible for the Gwinnett County Homestretch Down Payment Assistance Program. This program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s HOME Investment Partnerships Program Grant administered for Gwinnett County by the Gwinnett County Housing and Community Development Division.

## HOW CAN THE HOMESTRETCH DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ASSIST YOU?

The Homestretch Down Payment Assistance Program offers up to \$10,000 in down payment assistance through a 0 percent interest loan to qualifying first-time homebuyers who purchase affordable homes up to **\$323,000.00** (previously constructed homes/re-sale homes) or **\$346,000.00** (new construction homes) in Gwinnett County (property value limits are set by 95 percent median purchase price and are subject to change). The **five-year deferred payment** (no monthly payments are required) Homestretch funds must be used for down payment, title insurance purchasing, closing cost assistance, and/or prepaid items. No scheduled payments are required on the Homestretch loans during the five-year loan period. If the homebuyer occupies the home as their principal residence for five years following the date of the home purchase, the loan is satisfied and no repayment to Gwinnett County is required.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Eligible recipients are first-time homebuyers, including homebuyers who have not owned a home in the past three years, that:

- Have a total household income that does not exceed the HUD maximum income limits listed below;
- Are credit-worthy and qualify for a **fixed-rate mortgage**;
- Have a minimum credit score of at least **580**;
- Complete an **eight-hour minimum** pre-purchase Homebuyer Education Workshop provided by any **HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency and receive a Certificate of Completion**;
- Have at or less than **43 percent front-end and 55 percent back-end debt-to-income ratio** based on the comparison of the homebuyer’s income and minimum monthly debt; and
- Investors may not apply for the Homestretch Down Payment Assistance Program.

Household Size	Maximum Income Limits (Effective April 2024)
1	\$60,200
2	\$68,800
3	\$77,400
4	\$86,000
5	\$92,900
6	\$99,800
7	\$106,650
8	\$113,550

## WHAT ARE ELIGIBLE TYPES OF PROPERTIES?

Eligible properties must be in Gwinnett County and must qualify as one of the following:

- Single-family detached homes;
- Townhomes; or
- Condominiums.

The property also must pass a Uniform Physical Condition Standards inspection conducted by a Gwinnett County designated program inspector, prior to approving the purchase using HOME funds.

## WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM PURCHASE PRICE?

The purchase price of a home receiving Homestretch Down Payment Assistance cannot exceed **\$323,000.00** (previously constructed/re-sale homes) or **\$346,000.00** (new construction homes). However, the amount that each applicant can afford to spend on a home purchase will vary based on household income, mortgage interest rates, and other variables at the time of purchase.

## HOW DO I APPLY?

The application process involves the submission of pre-application documents and a formal orientation class. Applicants will not be considered eligible to receive funds until an application has been completed, the annual gross household income has been verified by program staff, and the Certificate of Program Eligibility has been received by the applicant.

## HOMESTRETCH DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS

1. **Complete an eight-hour minimum Pre-Purchase Mortgage Counseling Class** from a HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency. To submit a pre-application, you must have completed the class and obtained a Certificate of Class Completion. See Page 5 for a list of frequently used HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agencies in Metro Atlanta. *The certificate from this class is a required part of the pre-application package.*
2. **Meet with a mortgage lender** of your choice. The Gwinnett County Homestretch Program requires a **Pre-Approval Letter** from a mortgage lender showing the designated amount of mortgage and fixed-interest rate terms to be financed. Home mortgages must be a fixed-rate loan with no adjustable components. Also, ask your mortgage lender to provide **three bureau full credit reports with three credit scores**. At least one credit score must be **580 or higher**. *These documents are required as part of the pre-application package.*
3. Complete and sign the attached **Pre-Application Checklist**. *This document is required as part of this preapplication package.*
4. **Scan and email the following documents** in a single email to [Homestretch@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:Homestretch@GwinnettCounty.com):
  - Certificate of Pre-Purchase Education Completion (eight hours minimum) from a HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency
  - Pre-Approval Letter from a Mortgage Lender
  - Three Bureau Full Credit Report with three credit scores (one score of 580 or higher)
  - Pre-Application Checklist
  - Executed Purchase and Sale Agreement (if applicable) – **Note: This is not required to begin the remaining process but is required prior to confirming full eligibility.**

## **HOMESTRETCH DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE FORMAL APPLICATION PROCESS**

After the Program Specialist has reviewed the above documents, you will receive an appointment request form via email with a list of documents required to complete the formal program application, as well as income verification. If other pre-application documents are submitted without an executed contract, Gwinnett County will send an appointment request form to the applicant that must be filled out and returned by email, fax, in-person, or by United States Postal Service.

1. Orientation class times are scheduled online via Microsoft Teams. We will notify the homebuyer of the scheduled orientation classes.
2. The orientation class will be held at One Justice Square in Suite 420, located at 446 W Crogan Street in Lawrenceville.
3. Appointments are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis, while funding is available.
4. Applicants will be notified by email of the required documents to submit prior to the orientation class.
  - Annual Household Gross Income will be determined by multiplying the average amount of gross pay an individual (ages 18 years or older) in the household receives over a 2-month period, then projecting that amount of pay out for the upcoming year (multiply by the amount of annual pay periods).
  - Total Gross Income will be combined per household member's age (ages 18 years or older) for final calculation. Other forms of income include Social Security, child support, alimony, pension payments, unemployment, etc.
5. Applicants will not be considered eligible to receive HOME funds until they have submitted all required documentation and completed the required Homestretch Program application. Only after the applicant has received their Certificate of Program Eligibility will the applicant be considered eligible to receive funds.
6. Though a Homestretch applicant has been considered eligible for funds, properties under contract and submitted to the Homestretch Program will not be considered eligible for funding until the designated Homestretch Program Inspector inspects and issues a passed report that states that the property has met all program requirements. After the property has passed the program inspection, a funding Certificate of Program Eligibility will be issued and distributed to all involved parties as notification that the funding approval has been completed and the check is being requested.

**Note:** Bankruptcies by the applicant and co-applicant must have been discharged for at least two years prior to the date of the submission of a formal application. If a bankruptcy discharge has occurred, you will need to submit a copy of the discharge documents.

**GWINNETT COUNTY HOMESTRETCH DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

**APPLICANT NAME(S)** (as listed on first mortgage loan): \_\_\_\_\_

<b>DECLARATIONS</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Initials</b>
1. I/we are a first-time homebuyer(s) or have not owned a home in 3 years.			
2. I/we have been discharged and all debts paid from bankruptcy for at least 2 years. <i>(if you have never filed for bankruptcy, leave blank, fill in initials, then proceed to number 3)</i>			
3. I/we have completed an 8-hour Pre-Purchase Mortgage Counseling Class conducted by a HUD approved Housing Counseling Agency. <i>I have attached the class certificate.</i>			
4. I/we have a total annual household income <i>(all persons in household)</i> equal to or less than the HUD designated maximum income limits.			

**ADDRESS OF PROPERTY UNDER CONTRACT:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Please list the names of each household member along with corresponding relationship, age, and date of birth:</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>

<b>DECLARATIONS</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Initials</b>
5. Number of ALL persons living in your household		
6. Number of persons (18+) who have any incomes (i.e., wages, Social Security, unemployment, etc.)		
7. Annual household income <b>BEFORE</b> taxes for all persons (18+) combined in your household		
8. Sources of household income <i>(check all that apply)</i> : ___Employment Wages ___Social Security ___Pension ___Alimony/Child Support ___Unemployment ___401k/IRA ___Stocks/Bonds		

<b>DECLARATIONS</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Initials</b>
9. I/we understand that I/we must apply for and receive approval for a mortgage to purchase a home from a lender, and if the mortgage loan is not approved by the mortgage lender, assistance under the Homestretch Down Payment Assistance Program will not be approved.			
10. I/we have a Loan Commitment Letter from a mortgage lender.			
11. I/we have a three Bureau Credit Score Report from my mortgage lender and three credit scores.			
12. I/we have an executed real estate sales contract to purchase a house in Gwinnett County.			
13. Name of Mortgage Lender (Company/Bank):			
14. Loan Officer name:	Phone:	Email:	
15. Realtor name:	Phone:	Email:	

Applicant signature:	Date:		
Applicant name (print):	Date of birth:	Age:	
Co-Applicant signature:	Date:		
Co-Applicant name (print):	Date of birth:	Age:	
Current address:			
Email address:			

**ATTENTION FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYERS!**

First-Time Homebuyer Education HUD-Approved Requirement  
Pre-Purchase Homebuyer Education Workshop Certificate (eight hours minimum)

Gwinnett County’s Homestretch Down Payment Assistance Program is now accepting online Pre-Purchase Homebuyer Education Certificates from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs at [EHomeAmerica.org/DCA](http://EHomeAmerica.org/DCA).

For a list of Pre-Purchase Homebuyer Workshop Classes facilitated by any HUD-approved agency, visit [HUD.gov/HousingCounseling](http://HUD.gov/HousingCounseling). These courses will prepare you to make an informed choice when you purchase a home. Be an informed homebuyer and enroll today!

Course highlights include:

- Understanding home mortgages and underwriting criteria
- Planning for homeowner responsibilities
- Evaluating your ability to afford a home
- Presentations by housing professionals
- Types of financing available
- Down payment assistance
- Budgeting
- Credit; and
- Avoiding default

Organization	Telephone	Website
Georgia Department of Community Affairs	404.327.6858	<a href="http://EHomeAmerica.org/DCA">EHomeAmerica.org/DCA</a>
Clearpoint Credit Counseling Solutions	800.251.2227	<a href="http://Clearpoint.org">Clearpoint.org</a>
Catholic Charities Atlanta	770.429.2369	<a href="http://CatholicCharitiesAtlanta.org">CatholicCharitiesAtlanta.org</a>
D&E Financial Education & Training Institute	770.961.6900	<a href="http://DEPower.org">DEPower.org</a>
Urban League of Greater Atlanta	404.659.1150	<a href="http://ULGAtl.org">ULGAtl.org</a>
Athens Land Trust, Inc.	706.613.0122	<a href="http://AthensLandTrust.org">AthensLandTrust.org</a>

*\*A selection of HUD approved Housing Counseling Agencies in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area is provided for your convenience. This listing does not constitute an endorsement of any specific organization and our program will accept certification from any HUD approved Housing Counseling Agency.*