

Habitat homes are the best deal in the Cape Fear Region, where rents are increasing and houses within affordable price ranges close to where families work are getting harder and harder to find! We recognize that this is an ongoing issue that has been magnified after Hurricane Florence.



FAQ's – for Habitat's Modified Homeownership Program (Hurricane Impacted families):

Is your homeownership criteria different for Hurricane-Impacted families?

No. If you have been displaced or otherwise largely impacted by Hurricane Florence, you will be asked to fill out the same application as our original Homeownership Program. The criteria is the same, but if approved, we can modify your experience of the program in such a way that you are rehoused as quickly as possible.

If I am displaced, how might the program be modified for me if I am approved?

For example, if the construction of your house is completed before you have completed your Sweat Equity or homeownership classes, you may rent-to-own that home for up to a year. You can then close on the house when the Sweat Equity, classes, and other program requirements are achieved.

FAQ's – for Habitat's Homeownership Program (for all applicants):

Are Cape Fear Habitat houses free?

No. Approved families purchase their homes from Cape Fear Habitat through an affordable mortgage.

Is there a down payment required?

No down payment is required, although currently closing costs are \$3000. Monthly payments in an amount determined by you and the Consumer Credit Counselor towards closing costs and/or debt will demonstrate your willingness to enter into a loan agreement with Habitat.

How much is the Cape Fear Habitat monthly mortgage payment?

The monthly mortgage payment varies depending on the cost of each individual home and will not exceed 30% of the borrower's (and co-borrower's) gross monthly income.

What is included in a homeowner's monthly mortgage payments?

Principal payment (pays down the amount owed on the home loan), Homeowners Insurance Premiums, Property Taxes, HOA dues, if any, etc... (Fun Fact: Mortgage Principle Payments go towards building more homes for more people! Some refer to it as a "pay-if-forward" model.)

How do homeowners complete their sweat equity hours?

Approved families will partner with Cape Fear Habitat in the construction of other homes as well as their own homes. No construction experience is necessary or expected prior to entering the program. Homeowners can also complete a portion of sweat equity hours by working in one of Cape Fear Habitat's Restores, by participating in outreach events, or by assisting in the Administrative Office. Mandatory attendance at Homeownership Classes counts for a portion of Sweat Equity, as well.

How many sweat equity hours are required?

Minimum total hours: 2 Adult Family = 400 hours, 1 Adult Family = 250 hours. *Some of these hours can be donated by friends and family.* Each adult can expect to work and maintain an average of 16 hours each month.

About the Sweat Equity...what if I'm disabled?

We will work with you on a realistic Sweat Equity plan that works with your capabilities and your doctor's recommendations. We want you to be involved as much as you can, and we can be creative!

Where would I live?

You will be offered construction-ready property that is in our land-inventory and that you are

eligible for (county/number of bedrooms/affordability/loan type). We typically have land inside the city limits of Wilmington, as well as northern New Hanover County. In Pender County, we anticipate building in Burgaw and Rocky Point. In Duplin County, we will be building in Wallace. When possible, you will be provided with land options during the application process so you'll know where your future home will be if your application is approved.

What does it mean to be a Habitat Homeowner?

You'd buy a house just like anyone else, and we are here to encourage your success! We don't profit from high interest rates like a bank would. Your mortgage payments will be used to build more houses for more families. We're committed to make your payment affordable for your family (less than 30% of your monthly income). Monthly payments on the principle for a Habitat mortgage will stay the same, regardless of your income in the future, but taxes and insurance do often increase. You'd be responsible for maintaining and repairing your home. Your Habitat Home can either be your family's starter-home or you can make it your forever home. We are fully supportive of both paths, with either decision having unique benefits that only home owners get a chance to experience!

What are the benefits of being a Habitat Homeowner?

There are many advantages to completing our program prior to homeownership: Training on personal financial management to support a successful future, despite life's curveballs; homeownership education to help you be confident and knowledgeable about your home and everything it takes to take care of your home, the experience of building your own home with your own two hands and learning its systems, the connections you'll make with the community and its available resources, you'll make friendships that can last a lifetime, you'll learn new skills that can be put on a resume...there are endless benefits!

Qualification FAQs

What if I have bad credit or a bankruptcy?

We are not looking for a particular credit score. We are looking to see your payment history and that there are no judgments that could attach to a future home as a lien. Will review charge-offs and collections. If you don't have a Credit Report, you will be asked to submit utility bills to demonstrate your payment history.

Can I apply if there are no children in my household?

Yes. Cape Fear Habitat does not require homebuyers to have children in order to qualify.

Do homebuyers need to be members of a church?

No, we do not accept or decline applications based on church membership or religious affiliation.

What if I have a something on my criminal record?

We will conduct a standardized criminal background assessment on each household member aged 18 or older to determine if the report will disqualify you from the program at this time. Please contact our Homeowner Services Manager for further questions about the assessment form used.

What if I live in Brunswick County?

We build in New Hanover, Pender and Duplin counties only. However, if a Brunswick County resident works in our service area and would like to move to our service area to be closer to their job, please submit an application! If this doesn't describe your situation, please contact the Brunswick County Habitat Affiliate at 910-454-0007.

Application Process FAQs

How can I apply to buy a Cape Fear Habitat home?

If you are interested in applying for Cape Fear Habitat's Homeownership Program, you may print the application packet [here](#). You may also call 910-762-4744 or send an email to info@capefearhabitat.org to request one to be mailed to you. You may be invited to attend an optional Information Session, where applications are given out, but attendance is *not required* to obtain an application. Applications are also available at our administrative office on: 20 North 4th St., Suite 200, Wilmington, NC 28401

How long is the waiting list for prospective homebuyers?

Currently, *we do not have a waiting* list for homeownership! The length of the application and build process will vary depending on each applicant's financial readiness as well as the availability of properties. Also, required sweat equity hours must be complete before purchasing the home.

How long is the application process? When will I move into my home?

The application process usually takes between 1 to 2 months. Once the application is approved, the process from beginning sweat equity to occupancy usually takes between a year to a year and a half, depending on each applicant's individual circumstances and the availability of properties, or it may be longer depending on other factors. (Hurricane displaced families may be accelerated through the program to be in a home more quickly). This information will be reviewed with each approved candidate individually.

I know someone who I think will qualify for a home. What can I do?

Please direct your friends to this website or encourage them to call our office at 910-762-4744 to request an application be mailed to them, or email the request to info@capefearhabitat.org.

What happens if my application is denied?

If applicants do not meet Cape Fear Habitat for Humanity's criteria and are not accepted into the program, they will receive a letter with the reason and a referral to other resources. There is no limit to how many times an individual can apply for a Habitat home, so we encourage applicants to reapply when situations change.

What my denial letter states that I do not meet the financial requirements?

If your application is declined for income or debt-related reasons, you are encouraged to request a follow-up meeting with the Credit Counselor to discuss tips to improve your financial situation. Doing this has helped many people change their situation both quickly and over time. Several families are now Habitat Homeowners because they went the extra mile to do this and ask important questions.