

HouseCharlotte Frequently Asked Questions

How much HouseCharlotte assistance am I eligible for?

- Up to \$8,500 for families with household income at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI)
- Up to \$10,000 for Public Service employees with household income at or below 80% AMI
- Up to \$5,000 for families with household income above 80% AMI, up to 110% AMI **in select HouseCharlotte designated Neighborhood Profile Areas (NPA's).**
- **PILOT PROGRAM**--Up to \$17,000 for families with household income **at or below 80% AMI in select City of Charlotte High Cost NPA's.**

What can the financial assistance be used for?

- Down payment
- Points buy down
- Closing costs

How will I know if my income qualifies for down payment assistance?

The HouseCharlotte program is based on total household income and family size. You can go to the HouseCharlotte website and view the Median Income Matrix. To qualify for HouseCharlotte funds, the household income cannot exceed 110% of the Area's Median Income (AMI).

How do I know if the house I want to buy is in an eligible Neighborhood?

You may check for eligible neighborhoods through the HouseCharlotte website www.HouseCharlotteProgram.com. Households with income at or below 80% AMI can purchase anywhere within the City of Charlotte. ***Tenant occupied properties are not eligible for purchase using HouseCharlotte funds.***

What is the maximum purchase price for the program?

Maximum purchase price of **\$193,000** for existing property, and **\$224,000** for new construction property.

Do you call neighborhoods by the same names as the builders call them?

No, the areas are not named, but now have a NPA (Neighborhood Profile Area) number. To determine if the house is in an eligible neighborhood refer to the website. There is a link under the heading **Address Search** to "**HouseCharlotte Mapping Application**". Click this link, type the property address into the search bar and click "Enter!" The indicator will show within the HouseCharlotte area if it's an eligible property.

How are the High Cost neighborhoods determined?

These are neighborhoods found to have an average housing cost of over \$175,000. The ***Pilot Program*** allows buyers with income at or below 80% AMI to qualify for up to \$17,000 in downpayment assistance when buying in these neighborhoods. This will allow the program to better assist low-moderate income families to be able to purchase in neighborhoods with escalating prices.

Who is considered a Veteran of the military?

A veteran is a **former** member of the Armed Forces of the United States (***Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard***) who served on ***active duty*** and was ***discharged under conditions, which were other than dishonorable.***

How do I apply for down payment assistance?

Your Lender will submit the request on your behalf. See the list of approved lenders on the HouseCharlotte website. An approved lender/Loan Officer must be used. **Effective July 1, 2017** HouseCharlotte will no longer be able to accept loan request from Loan Officers who have not completed the HouseCharlotte training, and Mandatory Annual Updates.

Is an inspection required to receive HouseCharlotte funds?

Yes. The property must pass a HouseCharlotte inspection prior to receiving funds. However, this is a code inspection, not a complete home inspection. It is highly recommended that you get a full home inspection from a reputable licensed Inspector. The initial code inspection along with one additional re-inspection is provided at no charge to the borrower. If additional inspections are needed for any reason, the contact person on the Inspection Request Form will be responsible for payment to the Inspector at the time of re-inspection(s). ***Please note that borrowers should use caution in relying solely on the HouseCharlotte inspection. The HouseCharlotte inspection generally covers code violations. Therefore we highly recommend that borrowers hire their own Inspector to complete a full structural/mechanical home inspection in addition to the HouseCharlotte inspection.***

For new construction homes less than 6 months old, a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) is required.

In lieu of the HouseCharlotte inspection, buyer(s) have the option, at the buyer's cost, to hire an independent, licensed NC Home Inspector. However, this Inspector must complete the HouseCharlotte Minimum Housing Code form along with their normal inspection form. Both should be forwarded to HouseCharlotte upon completion. *This document, as well as the HouseCharlotte Inspection Request form can be found on the website.

Who can request the HouseCharlotte home inspection?

The inspection can be requested by the Realtor, the Lender or the buyer.

Who would I contact to take the *homebuyer education course and counseling* as required for the HouseCharlotte Program?

You may contact the Homeownership Center of Charlotte at 704-342-0933 or Prosperity Unlimited, Inc. at 704-933-7405. Also acceptable for other local HUD approved Counseling Agency as long as both total a minimum of 8 hours. A list of local agencies is on the HouseCharlotte website. All North Carolina HUD approved agencies can be found on www.hud.gov. Pre-Purchase Counseling & Homebuyer Education totaling a minimum of 8 hours is required.

Online Education is accepted from *E-Home & Framework ONLY*. Generally 4 hours credit is given for online education. 1-on-1/Face-to-face Counseling must be included with online education also.

How long is the training course?

The training course varies in length, depending on which agency you have chosen to take the class with. Typically, the course consists of up to 8 hours, and is offered on Saturdays and weeknights to try to accommodate your schedule. Upon completion of the course, you will receive a homebuyer education certificate that is good for one year. **NOTE:** 1-on-1/Face-to-face Counseling is also required. Please contact the agency you wish to work with to learn more about class dates and times.

When should I take the course?

As stated above, the homebuyer education certificate is good for one year. It is recommended you take the course as soon as possible, as you will gain a wealth of information on homeownership. It is not required that you have a home identified prior to taking the course, however, you will need to complete the course before you can close and receive HouseCharlotte down payment assistance funds. Keep in mind that the certificate you will receive upon completion is valid for one year.

Is everyone listed on the mortgage required to take the class?

Yes.

Should I contact the HouseCharlotte loan representative in reference to my loan status?

No. The loan officer or real estate agent will be in contact with the representatives of HouseCharlotte, on your behalf. In an effort to expedite the HouseCharlotte file processing, we encourage buyers to direct any questions or requests for status updates to their loan officer.

How long does it take HouseCharlotte to process the file?

Upon receipt of a **complete** loan package, it takes approximately 10 business days from receipt of a complete package to process the file and get the check for closing. However, if the package is incomplete, it may take longer. A HouseCharlotte loan representative will notify the lender if items are needed which will cause a delay in processing.

How often is the eligible Neighborhoods (NPA) listing updated?

Eligible NPA's are determined and updated by the City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services Department at the discretion of the City of Charlotte.

May I request a neighborhood to be added to HouseCharlotte?

No. NPA's are determined by the Housing & Neighborhood Services Department, as explained above.

How does a lender get on the Approved Lender's List?

The Lender Agreement and instructions links are on the website www.HouseCharlotteProgram.com. Once completed forward all requested documentation to Ron Mason, City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services department. Address is included on the documentation.

Effective July 1, 2017 - all Loan Officers who will use the HouseCharlotte program must complete training. Lender Training is Mandatory, as well as any update trainings, when applicable. Contact HouseCharlotte@cmhp.org for details.

For additional information, please call HouseCharlotte at 704-705-3999 or send an email to HouseCharlotte@cmhp.org.