



Always First in Homeownership



The First Place Program helps potential first-time homebuyers or qualified veterans save money by offering mortgage financing with interest rates that are lower than regular market rates. For homebuyers with limited savings, the program provides the option for Cash Assistance to be used for down payment and closing costs. Loans are provided by Certified Lenders for any eligible property in the State of Missouri. All interest rates and allowable closing costs are set by the Missouri Housing Development Commission with no minimum down payment or minimum loan amounts.

First Place With Down Payment Assistance

Not only can first-time homebuyers* receive lower rates, qualified homebuyers are eligible to receive a 100% forgivable second loan equal to 4% of the total mortgage amount to help with down payments and closing costs. The second loan will be forgiven if the borrower stays in the home and maintains the original loan for ten years. After year five, the second mortgage will begin diminishing by 1/60 every month until year 10 when it will be completely forgiven.

First Place Without Down Payment Assistance Loans

Qualified first-time homebuyers* may opt to use the First Place Program without Down Payment Assistance to save even more money by lowering their initial interest rates. Typically, these loans are .25% to .50% below the rates offered with Down Payment Assistance. Non-Down Payment Assistance Loans are best for buyers who have adequate funds to pay down payment and closing costs but are looking to save more money with better rates.

Eligible Loans

- Initial purchase loans
- FHA, VA, or USDA-Rural Development
- FNMA HFA Preferred Conventional or Freddie Mac HFA Advantage Conventional
- 30-year loans
- Refinanced mortgage loans are not eligible. Exceptions are construction-to-permanent loans and bridge loans with an initial term of less than 24 months.

Talk to a certified lender to help you decide the best loan type for you.

Eligible Borrowers

Eligible borrowers must meet credit score, debt-to-income ratio thresholds, and be within eligible household income ranges. Minimum eligibility requirements include:

- First-time homebuyer or qualified veteran*
- Minimum credit score of 640 (subject to change)

- Debt-to-income ratio of 45% or less for FHA, VA, and USDA-RD (up to 50% DTI is allowable with a credit score of 680 or above for these loans)
- Debt-to-income ratios up to 50% or less for Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae HFA loan programs
- The total gross annual household income must be within the established limits (vary by area)
- Loans are subject to federal compliance requirements and may have minimum credit scores greater than 640—lenders reserve the right to be more restrictive

Total gross annual household income is calculated using all sources of income for all borrowers and household members living, or intending to live in the home including, but not limited to wages, overtime, bonuses, child support, alimony, commissions; and earnings from a second job; business and investments.

Eligible Properties

The purchase price of a home financed through the program cannot exceed the established limits for Missouri properties. Eligible properties include:

- Homes within the purchase price limits (see website for details)
- Single-Family Detached
- Qualified Owner-Occupied one- or two-unit duplexes
- Semi-Detached
- Condominiums
- Town Homes
- Double-wide mobile homes, modular or manufactured housing attached to a permanent poured foundation

Rates, Fees, and Requirements

- Interest rates may vary. Talk to a certified lender to find out current interest rates and closing costs and fees
- Interest rates are fixed for the life of the loan
- Homebuyer must occupy the home within 60 days of closing as a primary residence
- Loans made in this program may be subject to recapture tax provisions under federal law
- No junk fees are allowed
- Lender may charge standard closing fees

What's next?

Interested borrowers must contact a **Certified Lender** to apply for the loan. Funds are allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis. When you visit the lender to make your loan application, it is important that you have the following information with you:

- List of all outstanding debts and credit cards, including name and address of the company, account numbers, unpaid balances, and monthly payment amounts
- Name and address of employer(s)
- Copy of your most recent pay stub(s)
- Copies of divorce decrees, if applicable, and any other documents relating to circumstances which affect your financial status

****Exceptions:***

Homebuyers do not have to be first-time buyers if they purchase homes in **federally-targeted census tracks**. Consult your lender for specific locations of targeted areas. Generally, loans originated in targeted areas receive priority for the lowest First Place Home Loan rate that has been offered by MHDC in the last 12 months.

Qualified veterans do not have to be first-time homebuyers. A qualified veteran is any veteran who served on active duty, was not dishonorably discharged, and has not previously obtained a mortgage loan financed by tax-exempt mortgage revenue bond proceeds under the qualified Veterans exception.

First time homebuyers are defined as those persons who have not owned a home or had an ownership interest in a primary residence for the past three years.

Please direct all questions about your loan application to the Certified Lender.