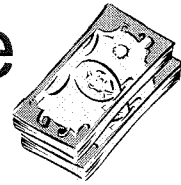




The Growing Homeowners Initiative



What is the **Growing Homeowners Initiative**?

A matched savings and education initiative to help individuals and families turn the dream of purchasing a home into a reality.

How can **Growing Homeowners Initiative** funds be used?

- The saved money and match money must be used toward the purchase of a home in Luzerne County.
- The money can be used toward closings costs, down payment, or a combination of both.
- The match money is secured by a second mortgage that is forgiven over a five-year period.

How does the **Growing Homeowners Initiative** work?

Currently, interested people who apply and are determined financially within the guidelines must commit to the following:

- ◆ Opening a savings account and starting a savings plan for at least a 90-day period. Length of time in program will vary for each participant.
- ◆ Working with a homeownership specialist to set a goal and an action plan on how to achieve the goal.
- ◆ At the closing on a purchase of a home, your savings will be matched \$2 for every \$1 saved. The amount of matching funds provided will not exceed \$7500.
- ◆ Attending at least 3 homebuyer readiness workshops including such topics as developing a budget, credit and credit repair, obtaining a mortgage, what to look for when buying a home, etc.

*Additional assistance may be available depending on household income

Who is eligible for the **Growing Homeowners Initiative**?

- ◆ Anyone who is a current resident of Luzerne County for at least a year and is interested in purchasing a home now or in the future whose household income does not exceed the guidelines listed below --

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Annual *Min/Max.Income Limit</u>
1 person	\$14,437/\$41,250
2 person	\$16,485/\$47,100
3 person	\$18,550/\$53,000
4 person	\$20,615/\$58,900
5 person	\$22,260/\$63,600
6 person	\$23,905/\$68,300
7 person	\$25,567/\$73,050
8 person	\$27,212/\$77,750

*Lower minimums only qualify with housing choice voucher or other subsidized program.

How does someone apply for the **Growing Homeowners Initiative**?

Basic steps to apply for the initiative are:

- ◆ Fill out an application and send it to the HDC office -- the Homeownership Specialist will call to set up an appointment.
- ◆ Attend appointment with the Homeownership Specialist; bring income verification and social security cards for the entire household.

Revised March 2012



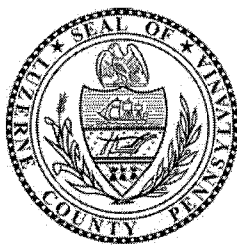
Helping People to have a Home.

**For more information
or to apply contact:
Housing Development Corporation
570-824-4803 (Wilkes-Barre)
570-501-1030 (Hazleton)**

Governed by the Luzerne County Housing Trust Association



LUZERNE COUNTY
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
54 West Union Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA. 18711



LUZERNE COUNTY HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM

OBJECTIVE: The objective of the Luzerne County's Homeownership Program is to create affordable home buyer opportunities for low to moderate income persons. The goals of the program are as follows:

- The creation of decent, affordable housing units in areas of the County that have seen a decline in home ownership;
- Removal of blighted conditions in residential neighborhoods;
- Neighborhood revitalization;
- Creation of mixed income neighborhoods;

ELIGIBLE FUNDING RECIPIENTS: Non-profit community based organizations and for profit developers.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES: Funds will be provided for the following activities:

- Acquisition and/or rehabilitation of existing properties
- New construction
- Infill housing
- Acquisition and demolition of sub-standard properties for purposes of new construction will be considered

Preference will be given to project that promote mixed income neighborhoods, revitalization of deteriorated neighborhoods, as well as, Energy Star rated homes.

ELIGIBLE COSTS: Costs to acquire, rehabilitate, demolish and construct housing are eligible for funding.

PROGRAM FINANCING: Dollars will be provided to fill a funding gap in a project. The amount and terms of funding for a specific project will be determined upon review of the proposal submitted and be based on the type of financing required (i.e. short term interim construction financing, financing to write down the cost of a home to make it affordable, etc.). The maximum amount of funding will be no more than is necessary to make the project affordable for low and moderate income persons up to 100% of median income. County funding dollars invested in a project shall be secured by a lien on the property.

PROGRAM MECHANICS: Potential developers must submit an application to the County, along with required supportive documentation, including evidence of other funding sources, a clear scope of work, site plan and cost estimate for the project. There will be a minimum of 30

days for the Office of Community Development to determine if the project is eligible and to ensure availability of funds. Applications determined to preliminarily meet program requirements by the Office of Community Development will be provided to the County Manager and/or County Council for consideration. If approved, a preliminary approval letter will be issued to the developer. A loan agreement will then be prepared by the County and a loan closing will be scheduled. County funds will not be made available until a loan closing has been held.

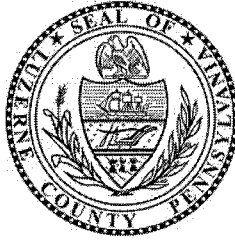
ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

- The project must be ready to commence within 6 months from approval.
- Ownership of County funded homes must be transferred to eligible homebuyers within 24 months of completion.
- HOME affordability requirements must be passed on to the eligible homebuyer and will be enforced through a lien placed on the home by the County.
- All HOME units must be inspected upon completion to ensure they meet State and local code.
- All projects utilizing County funds derived from the Federal government will be required to comply with Federal Labor Standards, including Davis Bacon Act, lead based paint requirements, as well as, any applicable regulations.

No person shall be discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or familial status.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Luzerne County Office of Community Development
54 West Union St., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711
Wilkes-Barre – (570) 824-7214



LUZERNE COUNTY RENTAL HOUSING PROGRAM

OBJECTIVE: The objective of the County's Rental Housing Program is to preserve affordable rental housing opportunities through the preservation of existing rental units and the development of new rental units. These efforts will focus on all segments of the low-income population with special emphasis on the creation of units for families with children. Properties must be located in an area where it has been determined that there is a shortage of rental housing. Preference will be given to projects that promote mixed income neighborhoods and neighborhood revitalization.

ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES: Properties must be located in Luzerne County and must be owned or leased by the developer. If purchasing the property through the program a signed sales agreement will be required. If leased, the term of the lease must, at a minimum, coincide with the term of the period of affordability.

ELIGIBLE FUNDING RECIPIENTS: Non-profit community based organizations and for profit private developers. Special consideration will be given to applicants who have a proven track record for developing rental housing.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- Acquisition and/or rehabilitation of existing properties
- Acquisition and demolition of sub-standard properties for purposes of new construction will be considered
- New Construction

If existing, property must be vacant or occupied by low income family that meets program requirements. Tenants cannot be asked to relocate in anticipation of applying for funds.

ELIGIBLE COSTS: Costs to acquire, rehabilitate, demolish and construct housing are eligible for funding.

PROGRAM FINANCING: Funding for the Rental Housing Program is derived from the County's HOME allocation and is based upon availability of funds and demand on the program. The amount and terms of funding for a specific project will be determined upon review of the application. In no instance will funding exceed the per unit subsidy limits as established by

HUD. All HOME dollars invested in a project shall be secured by a lien on the property. Program requirements will be enforced through deed restrictions placed on the property.

PROGRAM MECHANICS: Potential developers must submit an application to the County, along with required supportive documentation, including evidence of other funding sources, a clear scope of work, site plan and cost estimate for the project. There will be a minimum of 30 days for the Office of Community Development to determine if the project is eligible and to ensure availability of funds. Applications determined to preliminarily meet program requirements by the Office of Community Development will be provided to the County Manager and/or County Council for consideration. If approved, a preliminary approval letter will be issued to the developer. A loan agreement will then be prepared by the County and a loan closing will be scheduled. County funds will not be made available until a loan closing has been held.

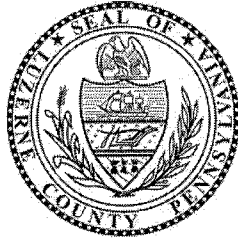
ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

- The project must be ready to commence within 6 months from approval.
- Developer must comply with requirements of the program for a period of affordability determined by the County.
- Completed HOME funded units must be rented to income eligible tenants.
- Developer must restrict rents to the maximum allowable through the HOME program throughout the period of affordability.
- Developer must recertify the income of all tenants in HOME funded units annually.
- All HOME units must be inspected and maintained to local and state code throughout the period of affordability.
- All projects utilizing County funds derived from the Federal government will be required to comply with Federal Labor Standards, including Davis Bacon Act, lead based paint requirements, as well as, any applicable regulations.

No person shall be discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or familial status.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Luzerne County Office of Community Development
54 West Union Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711
Wilkes-Barre – (570) 824-7214



LUZERNE COUNTY'S EMERGENCY HOME REHABILITATION PROGRAM

OBJECTIVE: Emergency Home Rehabilitation Program provides assistance to eligible homeowners in situations that create unexpected and immediate danger to the health and well being of the occupants of the home. Situations that would require a family to immediately vacate their homes and/or prevent them from returning if not addressed would also be considered for assistance. The Emergency Home Rehabilitation Program is designed to address only those items that meet the objective of the program and is not intended to be a home rehabilitation program.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES: Examples of an emergency situation are, no heat or water, hazardous electrical conditions, lead based paint hazards in the home of a child under 6 with elevated blood lead levels, severe lead based paint hazards, accessibility issues, or other factors determined by the inspector that create an immediate threat to the occupants or could lead to severe deterioration of the home.

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANT: Participants in the Emergency Home Rehabilitation Program must meet the following criteria for participation:

- Applicant must own and occupy the home
- Household income must be at or below 80% of median income for the area, as established by HUD.
- If the property is owned by a non-resident co-owner, the co-owner must sign all documents including, an agreement, mortgage and promissory note.

ELIGIBLE PROPERTY: In order for a property to be eligible for emergency home rehabilitation the following criteria must be met:

- The property must be located in Luzerne County, outside the Cities of Wilkes-Barre, Hazleton, Pittston and Nanticoke.
- The property must be a single family home. If the property consists of a double block home, the emergency work can only be performed on the owner occupied side of the home. In the case of a mobile home, the home must be on a permanent foundation and the homeowner must own the land on which the home is situated.

PROGRAM FINANCING: Funding, in an amount necessary to rectify the emergency situation, will be provided in the form of a non-interest bearing forgivable loan. A lien will be placed on the home for the 5 year term of the loan. The loan shall be forgiven 20% per annum over the 5 year period. If the property owner sells the home or transfers ownership prior to the expiration of the 5 year term, the unforgiven balance must be repaid to the County. CEO and/or the County reserve the right to reject any application if it is determined that the necessary repairs

are cost prohibitive or exceed the value of the home or a determination is made that to rectify the emergency situation would not be a prudent use of County funds. When applicable, CEO shall link the homeowner with appropriate agencies for guidance in attaining alternative housing options.

LEAD BASED PAINT HAZARD REDUCTION: Lead based paint hazard reduction activities will be considered under the Emergency Home Rehabilitation Program in instances where the inspector determines that severe lead hazards exist in a home or where lead hazards exist in the home of a child under 6 with elevated blood lead levels. When emergency work consists of lead hazard reduction activities, CEO shall comply with all requirements of the County's Lead Hazard Reduction Program. Contractors completing lead hazard reduction activities must be licensed and insured lead abatement contractor as required by the County's lead program.

PROGRAM MECHANICS: Participants will contact the Commission on Economic Opportunity (CEO) who will take preliminary information from the homeowner. CEO will then determine if an emergency situation exists. The homeowner will complete an application and submit it to CEO. CEO will prepare work specifications, cost estimate and obtain bids to complete the work. Once the contractor is selected closing documents will be signed and the work will commence. Once work is completed CEO will complete a final inspection.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Property taxes must be current. If not current, Applicant must submit a copy of the approved payment plan with the County.
- If property is in a floodplain, applicant must provide evidence of flood insurance.

No person shall be discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or familial status.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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