



Thank you for your interest in our homeownership program. We've included the application and a document checklist. Please be aware that all required documents must be received by our office in order for your application to be considered complete.

Next Steps

Contact our office to schedule a time to complete your application. Call (608) 448-2888 x3 or email office@hfhwisconsinriver.org to arrange this. Please note that a meeting is not required to submit your application for consideration; you may submit your paperwork at any time using the contact information within the application. However, a Habitat representative would be more than willing to assist you in this and is available to answer your questions.

Once we've received the completed application and other requested documents, your application will be reviewed by our Family Selection committee based on the demonstrated need for affordable housing, willingness to partner (sweat equity), and ability to pay an affordable mortgage. You can learn more about the program and criteria at our website: hfhwisconsinriver.org/home-ownership-program.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long does it take to be approved? It can take several months for your application to be processed. The committee reviews applications monthly, and then schedule a home visit with you. If they vote to recommend your application for the program, it must be approved by our board of directors before officially being selected for the program.

What if I already own land? The answer is "maybe". Habitat's building & site selection committee can discuss this with you. We are unable to install septic systems or wells, so lots must be buildable, ready for municipal water/sewer hookup, owned by the approved homebuyer and free & clear of any liens or delinquent taxes.

How much will my mortgage be? Each mortgage is based off of household income (not to exceed 30% of monthly gross income) and includes escrow for taxes and homeowner's insurance. On average a monthly mortgage payment is \$700-1000.

Is a downpayment required? Yes, once approved the future homebuyer will be asked to submit \$1000 downpayment towards their future home. Habitat will also work with the future homebuyer to apply for additional downpayment assistance programs.



Are there any other out-of-pocket costs? Prior to closing on your home, you will need to purchase your first year of homeowner's insurance (average \$600-800), attend a HUD homebuyer education course (\$99) and will also have the option to purchase a few upgrades for your home (this will be explained after selection).

What if I have bad or no credit? Is there a minimum credit score? You can get a free copy of your credit report at AnnualCreditReport.com or call 1-877-322-8228. We do not require a minimum credit score but do look at your payment history and any charge-offs, liens, collections and/or bankruptcies.

Habitat also offers a free one-on-one financial coaching program called Home Buyer's Club. Contact us for more information.

Does Habitat charge an application fee? No.

Is there a waiting list? No, once someone is selected into the homeownership program, we will begin working with you on your future home and provide you with a timeline of your planned home build.

Can I choose where my home is located or my house design? Habitat is not a custom home builder. Each home is designed to be basic, affordable and energy efficient. The average home is 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, and no more than 1100 square feet. But these are not "cookie cutter homes" and each house is intended to fit the future homeowners' unique family needs and size.

The location is determined by available property owned by Habitat. While we are always looking for buildable property, we cannot guarantee a specific location or community.

How long does it take to build a house? The actual home build can take 8-12 months but this is very dependent on the availability of volunteers, materials, contractors and (of course) Wisconsin weather!

What if a member of my household has disabilities and can't do construction work? Habitat offers a variety of ways to complete the required "sweat equity" volunteer hours. Once selected, each future homebuyer is partnered with a mentor who will work with them on ways to participate to the best of their abilities.

I need housing right away – can Habitat help me? Unfortunately, Habitat's homeownership program is not able to meet immediate and critical housing needs. We recommend contacting your county housing authority for guidance on available programs. You may also want to consider the USDA 502 Single Family Housing Direct Loan program at rd.usda.gov or by calling (715) 345-7601.

If you have any further questions or need assistance completing the application, please contact the Habitat office at (608) 448-2888. We look forward to your partnership.