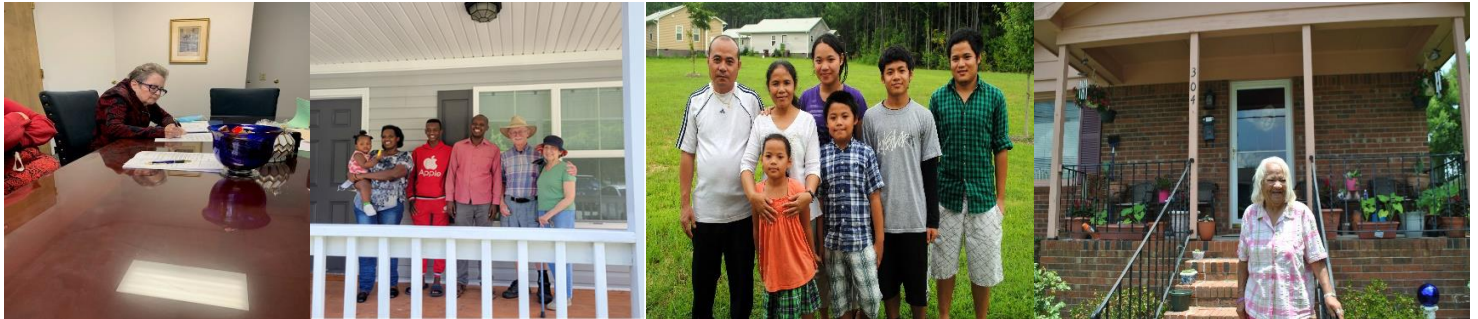




**Application  
Guide**



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Thank you for your interest in the Habitat for Humanity Homeownership Program. We believe everyone should have a safe and affordable place to call home. Since 1984, Habitat for Humanity Orange County has partnered with over 300 families to achieve stability, self-sufficiency and strength through home-ownership. We strive to build 20 homes annually, either through rehabilitating an existing home or building a newly constructed home.

**Applications are only accepted during open application periods. To learn more about open application periods, please join our interest list found on our website: [www.orangehabitat.org/home](http://www.orangehabitat.org/home). Email our Homeowner Services Team @ [applications@orangehabitat.org](mailto:applications@orangehabitat.org) or contact 919-932-7077 with questions.**



# Program Qualifications

## In Need of Better Housing

### The following are examples of need:

- You currently live in overcrowded or unsafe conditions
- You live in substandard housing (i.e. Structural problems [leaky roof, unsafe flooring, etc.]; Inadequate plumbing or electrical; Unhealthy conditions [mold, pests, etc.])
- You would be homeless if not for friends or family
- You need, and currently do not have, handicap accessibility
- You cannot qualify for a traditional mortgage
- You pay more than 30% of your gross income for rent

## Able to Pay an Affordable Mortgage

### Housing History

- You (or your co-applicant) must provide proof of residency **or** employment in Orange county for the past 12 months.
- You have not owned a home in the past 3 years or experienced a home foreclosure in the past 7 years.

### Credit Requirements

- You must provide a written and realistic plan to pay off all reported collections within 12 months. This plan can be in your own words and does not have to be set up through the creditor.
- If you have ever filed for bankruptcy, it must be 5 years since a Chapter 7 was discharged or 3 years since a chapter 13 was discharged.
- Debt-to-Income (DTI) Ratio should be around 13%.

### Income Requirements

Your gross income must fall within 30 to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Visit our website for updated AMI numbers.

- Verifiable sources of income including, but not limited to: wages, child support, social security, retirement, and alimony.
- For qualification purposes, there must be a reasonable expectation income will continue for 3 years after you close on your home. For example, a child who receives social security benefits ending at age 18 must not have turned 15 before closing. The same would apply to child support.
- A consistent employment history is required, if your income is received from employment.

### Criminal Background

- We will complete a criminal background check and sex offender registry check.

## Willing to Partner with Habitat

### Personal Time Commitment

- You are willing to invest 275 hours of time volunteering (sweat equity) to help build your house, build the houses of others, volunteer at the ReStore(s), attend budgeting meetings and attend Homebuyer classes.

# Applying

## ***BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION:***

- Visit the neighborhood listed on the flyer for the open application period. It's very important you have physically visited the neighborhood and/or properties. Buying a home is a big commitment and you want to be sure you are comfortable where your future home will be.
- Read and fill out all parts of the application carefully and completely. Leaving out information could disqualify your application.
- The application process can take several months. The more prepared you are beforehand, the smoother the process will go.

## **The Application Process**

*Prequalifying Survey:* applicant verifies basic requirements for the program. You will receive an email notification that your prequalifying information has been submitted.

*Pre-Approval Application:* applicant reports their household's ability to pay. Applicant will receive an email verifying their application has been submitted. Those who do not qualify based off of information from the application will be sent an email and letter notifying them they will not be moving forward with the application process.

*Credit Check:* Habitat will collect credit report to verify information. Applicants will receive an email and letter stating the results of the credit check. If the applicant is eligible the applicant will continue to the next stage of the application process. If they are not eligible they will receive notice of why.

*Collect Documents:* applicant will be invited to submit documents verifying income and debt. See attached list of required documents. Do not send in the original copies of these documents. They will not be returned to the applicant(s). Applicant(s) will be given a timeframe for returning the documents. If they timeframe is not met then the applicant(s) will be notified that their application is inactive.

*Underwriting:* Habitat will verify income documents to determine eligibility. Habitat staff will stay in close communication with the applicant(s) during this period as question may come up about the information. Applicant(s) will be notified when underwriting is complete. Applicant(s) that are eligible will be mailed and emailed notification that they are invited to interview with Habitat's Homeowner Services Team. Applicant(s) that are not eligible will be mailed and emailed notification of why their application was denied.

*Interview:* applicant(s) will interview with Homeowner Services Committee. In this interview the committee will verify the applicant(s) information and answer questions about the program. After all applicant(s) are interviewed the committee will select who will be selected for the program.

*Board Approval:* recommended applicants are presented to Habitat for Humanity's board for final approval. All applicant(s) will be mailed and emailed about the decision. Those that are approved will learn about how to begin the program. Those that are denied will be held in an applicant pool in case one of the applicant(s) is unable to fulfill the requirements of the program or we have an existing Habitat home available for resale.

## Required Documents

	Applicant	Co-applicant	Household Member
2 months of pay stubs	X	X	X
Award Letters (SSI, SSDI, Annuity, Alimony, or Pension)	X	X	X
Profit and loss statements for self-employment	X	X	X
1 year of child support documentation	X	X	X
W2 forms from the past 2 years	X	X	
Tax returns for the past 2 years	X	X	
<a href="#">Tax Return Transcripts</a> for the past 2 years	X	X	
2 months of bank statements	X	X	X
Student loan status letter	X	X	
Government Issued ID	X	X	
Social Security Card	X	X	
Current Lease	X	X	
Verification of Employment	X	X	X
Third-party authorization	X	X	X

