



## Wondering about Habitat for Humanity? Here are some Frequently Asked Questions.

### **What is Habitat for Humanity?**

Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit organization that builds housing for low-income families. Volunteers offering their time and donations from local individuals and organizations make Habitat's mission possible.

### **Who is eligible to become a partner family?**

McMinnville Habitat for Humanity believes that everyone needs a decent, affordable place to live. All are welcome to apply, regardless of race, religion, age, gender, political views or any of the other distinctions that too often divide people. In short, Habitat welcomes volunteers and supporters from all backgrounds and also serves people in need of decent housing regardless of race or religion.

### **How does it work?**

Habitat homes are not giveaways. Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds simple, decent houses alongside our homeowner partner families. These families not only work on their own homes, but they work on other homes as well – giving as they have received. Our partner families make down payments, pay taxes, and have monthly mortgages, but the mortgages are financed by Habitat for no-interest. These mortgage payments allow us to build more Habitat homes.

### **Is there a minimum credit score needed to apply?**

Habitat does not have a minimum credit score requirement, but we do take into consideration your credit history and current debt.

### **Are the homes free?**

No, the homes aren't free, but they are affordable. Habitat believes in a hand up, not a handout. Homes are affordable because of no-profit loans and the "sweat equity" provided by partner families and volunteers.

### **Do you accept ITIN?**

You must be a legal, permanent resident or citizen of the United States to apply.

### **Do you get to pick the location of where the home is to be built?**

No, you must live or work in the McMinnville Service Area for the past year. Our service area includes McMinnville, Amity, Carlton, Grand Ronde, Lafayette, Sheridan, Willamina, and Yamhill.

### **What if I have filed bankruptcy?**

Filing bankruptcy does not disqualify you. However, we require that you be three years past the discharge of your bankruptcy before we can partner with you.

### **How long is it from the time I apply for a home until I close and move in?**

Typically, families close on and move into their homes 18 months after their initial application is submitted. However, because our program relies on donations to fund homes, and community volunteers to help construct them, this time frame is variable.

### **Are there any restrictions on owning a Habitat House?**

Yes, like other affordable housing programs, Habitat for Humanity requires that its houses are homeowner occupied. This means that you cannot use it for business purposes, rent it out, or move out and let others live in your place. There may be an additional restriction that applies to maintain its affordability. Like all other mortgage companies, Habitat requires that the property (house and yard) are maintained in good condition.

### **What is sweat equity?**

Sweat equity refers to the actual hands-on involvement of Habitat homebuyers in the construction of their own homes, as well as participation in other Habitat and community activities. All sweat equity hours must be completed before pre-approved homebuyers purchase their home. Additional program requirements include homeownership education classes and community engagement events.