

For CalHFA loans rate locked on or before 03/02/2020



CALIFORNIA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY
USDA Program

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Program Summary

The CalHFA USDA program is an USDA guaranteed first mortgage loan program featuring a CalHFA fixed interest rate. This loan is fully amortized for a thirty (30) year term and can be combined with either the MyHome Assistance Program (MyHome) or School Teacher and Employee Assistance Program (School Program).

The CalHFA USDA loan is not subject to Recapture Tax.

Eligibility

Borrower Requirements

Each borrower must:

- All borrowers must be either a citizen or other National of the United States, or a “Qualified Alien” as defined at 8 U.S.C § 1641.
- Meet the credit, income and loan requirements detailed in this program handbook, as well as CalHFA Lender Manual, USDA, the CalHFA-approved lender, and CalHFA's master servicer's requirements.

Eligible Homebuyers

This program is available for both first-time and non-first-time homebuyers. When combining the CalHFA USDA with CalHFA subordinate loans, the first-time homebuyer requirement applies.

Homebuyer Education

Homebuyer Education counseling is required for one occupying first-time homebuyer. Homebuyer Education is not required for non-first-time homebuyer(s).

- Online Homebuyer Education through [eHome™](#)
- Face-to-Face Homebuyer Education through [NeighborWorks America](#) or through one of the [HUD approved Housing Counseling Agencies](#)

Owner Occupancy

- All borrowers must occupy the property as their primary residence within sixty (60) days of closing
- Non-occupant co-borrowers are not allowed
- Non-occupant co-signers are not allowed

Property Requirements

- Property must be located in an [USDA eligible rural area](#)
- Sales price of the home cannot exceed [CalHFA's sales price limits](#) established for the county in which the property is located
- Property must be a single-family, one-unit residence, including condominium/PUDs. In order for a condominium/PUD to be eligible for USDA guaranteed financing the project must meet all requirements of the USDA handbook as well as standards established by HUD, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac or VA. It is the responsibility of the lender and not the master servicer to meet these guidelines.
- Manufactured homes are permitted with the following parameters:

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Eligibility (cont.)

NEW MANUFACTURED HOMES (FIRST OWNER)

- › Singlewide manufactured homes are not eligible
- › Leaseholds and Community Land Trusts are not eligible
- › Unit must not have ANY alterations or additions since construction in the factory (e.g. decks, porches not allowed)
- › Manual Underwriting is not permitted on manufactured homes
- › All manufactured homes must meet USDA 7 CFR 3550.73, Master Servicer and CalHFA loan program requirements
- Non-permitted additions/alterations must follow USDA guidelines
- Lot size cannot exceed five (5) acres maximum
- Properties must meet the requirements of USDA and the California Health and Safety Code
- Refer to the Lakeview program matrix for their Disaster Policy
 - › See LakeviewCorrespondent.com for details
 - › Escrow Holdbacks will be allowed for minor outstanding repairs not completed prior to loan closing
 - » The Property must be habitable and safe for occupancy at the time of loan closing
 - » Lenders and/or closing agent will be responsible for managing and disbursing holdbacks
 - » Lender must deliver loans that were originated in accordance with USDA and Fannie Mae guidelines
 - › Please see Lakeview Loan Servicing website for required documents

Additional Property Guidelines

- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), Guest houses, “granny” units, and “in-law” quarters are eligible
 - › The property must be defined as a one-unit property
 - › Multiple accessory units are not permitted
 - › Must meet investor guidelines and city/county zoning ordinances
- Leasehold Estates
 - › Must follow USDA guidelines
 - › All Leasehold Estate documentation must be submitted to CalHFA’s Master Servicer with purchase package for review and approval
- Land Trusts and Co-ops are not permitted

Property Flipping

- Follow USDA first-mortgage underwriting guidelines
- CalHFA requires a copy of all appraisals as required by USDA.

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Eligibility (cont.)

- When multiple appraisals are required, CalHFA will base the subordinate loan amount(s) on the lesser of the sales price or lowest appraised value.
- Lakeview Loan Servicing (LLS), CalHFA's master servicer. To seek LLS approval contact the Counterparty Risk Management team at CRM@Lakeviewloanservicing.com

Lender Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for this program lenders must be approved by:

- CalHFA
- USDA

Broker Eligibility Requirements

Mortgage brokers can find a list of participating CalHFA-approved wholesale lenders on [CalHFA's mortgage broker webpage](#).

Underwriting & Compliance

Transaction type

Purchase transactions only

Term

Up to 30 years

USDA Direct is not permitted

LTV and CLTV

Loan-to-Value (LTV) to follow USDA first mortgage underwriting guidelines

Combined Loan-to-Value (CLTV) cannot exceed 105.00%

Maximum Loan Amount

The maximum loan amount (excluding upfront Guarantee fee, if financed) cannot exceed current USDA loan limits for the county in which the property is located.

USDA High Balance Loan Limits

All loans with a base loan amount exceeding current USDA loan limits will be subject to an additional fee. See CalHFA [rate sheet](#) for applicable fees.

All USDA High Balance Loan fees will be net funded at the time of first mortgage purchase by the master servicer.

Maximum Sales Price Limits

The Sales Price of the home cannot exceed CalHFA Sales Price Limits for the county in which the property is located.

Income & Sales Price Limits

The following reference materials disclose income and sales price limits by county:

- [CalHFA Income Limits](#)
- [USDA Income Limits](#)
- [Sales Price Limits](#)

Income Requirements

Lenders are required to calculate income to credit qualify borrower(s) for loan approval using USDA guidelines. CalHFA will use the lender's credit qualifying income to determine if the loan exceeds the

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Underwriting & Compliance (cont.)

maximum program income limit. Income not used by the lender for credit qualifying will not be used by CalHFA.

Maximum Program Income Limits

The income cannot exceed the lesser of the published [CalHFA income limits](#) or [USDA income limits](#) detailed in this program handbook established for the county in which the property is located.

Qualifying Ratios

The maximum total Debt-to-Income (DTI) ratio cannot exceed 45.00%. MCC may not be used for credit qualifying purposes.

Minimum Credit Score

- Credit Score: 660
- All borrowers must meet the minimum representative credit score requirements
 - › Borrowers with no credit score are not permitted
 - › Non-traditional credit is not accepted
- The middle score of the lowest-scoring borrower should be used to determine eligibility
 - › If a tri-merged credit report is used, use the middle score
 - › If a merged credit report only returns two scores, use the lower score
 - › If a merged credit report only returns one score, that score must be used

Automated Underwriting

Automated Underwriting: All loans must be submitted through Guaranteed Underwriting System (GUS). GUS Underwriting Recommendation of Accept / Eligible only.

Manual Underwriting is not permitted.

Sales Concessions/Contributions

Concessions/contributions as per USDA guidelines except for the following:

- Payment of condominium fees
- Personal property
- Down payment assistance
- Please see [LakeviewCorrespondent.com](#) for additional requirements

Miscellaneous Lakeview Loan Servicing Underwriting Guidelines

- Credit Underwriting is the responsibility of the originating lender
- Underwriters should:
 - › Make sound credit decisions
 - › Assure data integrity
 - › Include all necessary documents in support of the underwriting decision
- Tax transcripts are required for the previous two years for all borrowers and all adult household member, per USDA guidelines
- Non-arm's length transactions must be fully disclosed

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Underwriting & Compliance (cont.)

- Appraiser must meet all USDA and master servicer guidelines, see LakeviewCorrespondent.com for details
- 2-1 or 1-1 temporary buydowns are permitted as per USDA and master servicer guidelines
 - › Loan must be credit qualified at Note rate

In the case of conflicting guidelines, the lender must follow the more restrictive to meet the credit, income limits, total debt-to-income ratio and loan and property requirements of CalHFA, USDA, the lender or the master servicer.

All loans are subject to audit by both CalHFA and Lakeview Loan Servicing.

Subordinate Financing

CalHFA Subordinate Financing

This program may be layered with the following down payment and/or closing cost assistance options, for first-time homebuyers only; unless the borrower has been affected by a California natural disaster as described below.

- Must be recorded in Second Lien Position
- For full School Program underwriting guidelines and details see the [School Program Handbook](#)

MyHome and School Program may not be combined.

MyHome Assistance Program

- May be used for closing cost and/or downpayment assistance
- In the case of conflicting guidelines, the lender must follow the more restrictive
- Must be recorded in Second Lien Position
- For full MyHome underwriting guidelines and details see the [MyHome Program Handbook](#)

Borrowers affected by natural disasters in California

To be eligible for CalHFA Financing:

- Previous property must be located in an area declared as a Major Disaster and posted on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)website
- Previous property must have been the borrower's primary residence
- Previous property must have been destroyed or declared uninhabitable with supporting documentation supplied from either (i) the insurance company or (ii) the local government jurisdiction

School Teacher and Employee Assistance Program (School Program)

- May be used for down payment assistance and/or closing cost
- In the case of conflicting guidelines, the lender must follow the more restrictive

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Subordinate Financing (cont.)

- Borrowers affected by a declared Major Disaster are eligible to purchase a new home using CalHFA loan programs within three (3) years of that Major Disaster's declaration date
- In the case of conflicting guidelines, the lender must follow the more restrictive
- Must be recorded in subordinate lien position to CalHFA Subordinate Financing

Non-CalHFA Subordinate

This program may be layered with locality programs to be used for closing costs and/or down payment assistance as per individual requirements.

- The locality subordinate loan must meet USDA underwriting guidelines
- The maximum CLTV must meet CalHFA requirements

Other Programs and Assistance

This program may be layered with a Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC). The MCC credit may not be used for credit qualifying purposes.

CalHFA Loan Process (Submission, Approval & Purchase)

The lender must upload to CalHFA's [MAS](#) a fully approved loan package per CalHFA's [Loan Submission Checklist](#) for program policy, compliance review and desktop underwriting validation. The loan file must include the USDA issued conditional approval on RD 3555-18/18E.

CalHFA will review loan files on a first-come, first-served basis. CalHFA reviewers will notify lenders of each conditional loan approval, suspension and/or rejection via MAS

Suspended loan files will not be reviewed until all suspense items are uploaded to MAS.

Upon receipt of the Notice of Commitment, the lender is authorized to close the loan(s). After closing, the lender will upload a closed first mortgage purchase package to CalHFA's master servicer Lakeview Loan Servicing and any CalHFA subordinate loan (i.e. ZIP, MyHome or School Program) purchase package(s) to CalHFA for purchase.

Lenders must submit applicable ZIP, MyHome or School Program purchase packages to CalHFA at the same time the first mortgage is submitted to the master servicer to ensure that the purchase of all loans meet the rate lock expiration.

All loans must meet the rate lock expiration date.

Fees

Service Release Premium (SRP)

- Lenders will earn a 1.00% Service Release Premium to release servicing to Lakeview Loan Servicing (LLS) at time of purchase
- LLS will purchase loans directly from lender on a daily basis
- Lender Allowable Fees (Origination & Processing)
- Customary lender origination fees not to exceed the greater of 3% of the loan amount or \$3,000
- Other customary third party fees such as credit report fee, appraisal fee, insurance fee or similar settlement or financing cost
- In all cases the lender must meet federal and California lending laws regarding fees and charges

Master Servicer Fees

- LLS funding fee is \$250 per loan
- Tax Service fee to LLS is \$75 per loan
- Life of Loan Flood Certificate fee to LLS is \$10 per loan
- Funding fees paid by the borrower or seller must be disclosed and documented on the final Closing Disclosure
- Other customary master servicer fees may apply
- LLS will not purchase High Cost Loans
- Lenders should refer to their legal/compliance department on how to disclose fees

Reservations, Rate Locks & Extensions

Interest rates are available on the CalHFA [Interest Rate page](#). Interest rates are subject to change at any time without notice.

Reservations

- Reservations with a floating rate will be accepted from 6:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time, seven days a week
- Rate locks will only be accepted between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday through Friday, excluding state-recognized holiday, and days that the U.S. financial markets are closed for business. Only lenders with full MAS access may lock the interest rate
- Lenders will have the option to float(90 days for existing/resale properties or 120 days for new construction properties) or lock the interest rate for sixty (60) days for both existing/resale properties and new construction properties
- All CalHFA subordinate loan(s) will receive the same reservation, lock and purchase periods as the CalHFA first mortgage
- Lender should factor in its own processing/underwriting time frames, as well as CalHFA compliance review, and master servicer review for purchase time frames when locking interest rates and submitting loan files

- Lenders may not lock a loan in MAS with an interest rate that is higher than the interest rate reflected on the CalHFA Notice of Commitment.
 - › If the current rate is higher than the rate on the CalHFA Notice of Commitment, please resubmit all updated loan documents at the higher rate including Accept/Eligible GUS findings, lender-signed transmittal summary, and final underwriting approval for CalHFA re-approval

Delivery Timeframes and Extensions

- Files should be received by the master servicer by the 45th day or earlier, to ensure time to clear conditions and purchase prior to rate lock expiration
- CalHFA offers rate lock extensions in 15 day increments up to a maximum of 120 days from the original expiration date
- Under no circumstances will CalHFA extend a rate lock period longer than 120 days for both existing or new construction properties from the original expiration date

Please see the [Rates & Reservation page](#) for full details and FAQs.

Basic Home Protection Coverage

Mandatory Home Warranty Insurance Coverage

- CalHFA requires that all first-time homebuyer(s) obtain a one-year home warranty protection policy
 - › Non-first-time homebuyers are not required to obtain a home warranty protection
- The insurance must cover the following items at a minimum:
 - › Water Heater(s)
 - › Air Conditioning
 - › Heating
- › Oven/Stove/Range
- Home Warranty to be paid through close of escrow
- Home Warranty must be disclosed on Final Closing Disclosure or copy of insurance declaration page required
- Exception to Home Warranty:
 - › If borrower is purchasing a new construction property from a builder and the builder is providing the home warranty
 - › Borrower is not a First Time Homebuyer

Pre-Closing Loan Submission

Loan Submission Process

A lender makes reservations through CalHFA's [Mortgage Access System](#) (MAS). Refer to the [Loan Submission Checklist](#) for minimum documentation requirements.

CalHFA USDA loan submission packages are to be sent electronically through MAS

Forms

The following form will be needed when submitting a CalHFA USDA loan to CalHFA:

[CalHFA Borrower Affidavit](#)

Post-Closing Loan Delivery & Purchase

Purchase Procedures

All CalHFA First Loans

- Use the master servicer Loan Purchase Checklist located on the website LakeviewCorrespondent.com to ensure you are submitting a complete and accurate package.
- Notes are to be endorsed to Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC
- Deeds of Trust are to be assigned to Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC
 - › All loans must be registered with Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems (MERS) at the time of delivery to Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC, and MERS transfer of beneficial rights of servicing rights must be initiated by the Lender, to Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC within 24 hours of loan purchase
 - › Register via MERS:
 - » Investor: 1010298 Lakeview Loan Servicing
 - » Servicer: 1010298 Lakeview Loan Servicing
 - » Subservicer: 1000723 LoanCare LLC
- CalHFA USDA closed loan files are to be sent electronically to the master servicer via the [Lakeview Correspondent Lending website](#) within ten (10) business days
 - › Logon link will be in the top left section of the website

- Loss Payee Clause:

Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC c/o LoanCare, LLC

ISAOA/ATIMA
PO Box 202049
Florence, SC 29502-2049

All loan deficiencies will be posted on the client facing website which is accessible 24 hours a day

All loans must be program approved and deficiency free before they can be purchased

All CalHFA Subordinate Loan(s):

- All CalHFA subordinate loans must be funded, delivered and purchased by CalHFA concurrently with the first mortgage
- CalHFA subordinate loan purchase packages are to be sent electronically through MAS
 - › Use the Loan Purchase Checklist to ensure you are submitting a complete and accurate package
- Subordinate loan documents are to be drawn in the Lender's name
 - › Note to be endorsed to CalHFA
 - » Register via MERS:
 - Investor: 1000645 California Housing Finance Agency
 - Servicer: 1000645 California Housing Finance Agency

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Post-Closing Loan Delivery & Purchase (cont.)

- » After loans are purchased transfer via Mortgage Electronic Registration System (MERS)
- Loss Payee Clause:

California Housing Finance Agency

Its successor and/or assigns
 Single Family
 Loan Administration – MS 350
 500 Capitol Mall, Suite 400
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Lender must use the following forms:

1. Most current version of standard USDA Fixed Rate Note
2. Most current version of standard USDA Deed of Trust
3. Lender must also use other applicable documents (e.g., PUD Rider, etc.)

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Sales Tools and Marketing Materials

1. [Government Program Matrix](#)
2. [Government Program Frequently Asked Questions](#)
3. [Scenario Calculator](#)
4. [Loan Submission, Review and Purchase Flow Chart](#)
5. [Lending Heroes Flyer](#)
6. [Lending Heroes Fillable Flyer](#)
7. [Lending Heroes Spanish Flyer](#)
8. [Lending Heroes Spanish Fillable Flyer](#)
9. [Lending Heroes Korean Flyer](#)
10. [5 Easy Steps to Buying Your First Home Flyer](#)
11. [5 Easy Steps to Buying Your First Home Spanish Flyer](#)
12. [CalHFA and Listing Agents: a Great Team! Flyer](#)

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