



## Down Payment Assistance Program for Refugees + Immigrants

### **INTRODUCTION**

NeighborWorks Lincoln is committed to supporting refugees and immigrants in their journey towards stability and homeownership. We attempt to understand the unique challenges faced by these individuals as they rebuild their lives in a new country. To address the financial barrier of a down payment, we have developed a Down Payment Assistance Program specifically for refugees and immigrants.

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Our Down Payment Assistance Program aims to empower refugees and immigrants by providing financial support to help achieve the aspiration of owning a home. By offering assistance with down payments, we strive to increase housing accessibility for these individuals and families. The program is designed to be inclusive, culturally sensitive, and responsive to the needs of diverse populations.

### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

To be eligible for the program, individuals must meet the following criteria:

1. *Refugee or Immigrant Status:* Applicants must hold refugee status, have been granted asylum, or possess lawful immigrant status.
2. *Income Limit:* Applicants must meet income eligibility criteria. Households must have annual income at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) limit. Please see the chart on the next page for specific income eligibility by household size.
3. *First-Time Homebuyer:* Participants must be first-time homebuyers, defined as individuals who have not owned a home in the past three years.
4. *Property* – The property must be inspected by NWL’s Rehabilitation Manager prior to any other inspection being completed on the property. Also contributing to this program are private funds designated for home rehabilitation. By layering these funds, households will be able to realize the goal of owning a home while receiving a rehabilitation scope that addresses life safety hazards and mitigates any major expenses for the first five years of ownership. Any funds designated for rehabilitation would be added to Pandemic Relief down payment funds and consolidated to make one loan, recorded in second position, which requires no payments, accumulates no interest, and is forgiven over a 10-year period.
  - A. Per the grant requirements, all properties must be tested for Radon as part of the inspection process. Should the radon test results show a level at 4.0 or above, radon mitigation will be required.
  - B. Property shall be located in disproportionately impacted geographies or located in a qualified census tract (QCT) as defined by 26 USC S 42(d)(5)(B)(ii)(1), as such section existed on January 1, 2022





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### PROGRAM BENEFITS

1. *Financial Assistance:* Qualified applicants will receive financial assistance in the form of a \$50,000 loan to cover a down payment and all closing costs. This is a 0% interest, no payments, forgivable loan (1/10<sup>th</sup> of the loan is forgiven each year for the first 10 years of the loan). If the resident ceases to use the property as a principal residence or sells the property during the 10-year period, then the remainder of the loan will be paid.
2. *Affordable Homeownership:* By reducing the burden of a down payment, we strive to make homeownership more affordable and attainable for refugees and immigrants.
3. *Cultural Sensitivity:* Our program aims to be culturally sensitive and accounts for the unique needs and preferences of refugees and immigrants, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for the Down Payment Assistance Program, interested individuals can follow these steps:

1. *Complete an NWL Application:* Prospective applicants will undergo an initial assessment to determine their eligibility for the program. Applications are available at our office at 2530 Q Street or on the NWL website (NWLIncoln.org).
2. *Application Submission:* Eligible individuals will be guided through the application process, including the submission of necessary documentation.
3. *Homeownership Education:*
  - A. Upon completion of the 8 hour Homebuyer Education Training, applicants will need to make an appointment for a Pre-approval Meeting with NeighborWorks<sup>®</sup> Lincoln. Applicants need to bring the items indicated during the training classes. The meeting will cover applicant's possible options for homeownership and how applicants personally can use the program.
  - B. If an applicant chooses to use one of NWL's programs, they will make an appointment with one of NWL's participating lenders for pre-approval for a first mortgage.
  - C. An ARPA Program addendum must be included when making an offer to purchase. When an applicant has an accepted Purchase Agreement on a suitable property, the applicant needs to contact the NeighborWorks Lincoln Rehabilitation Manager for a property evaluation.
4. *Financial Assistance:* Upon completion of the education course and pursuant financial counseling, eligible applicants can receive financial assistance to be used towards down payment and closing costs on the purchase of their first home.

At NeighborWorks Lincoln we recognize the importance of safe and stable housing for refugees and immigrants. Our Down Payment Assistance Program aims to bridge the financial gap and provide a pathway to homeownership, fostering economic empowerment.





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For more information or to start the application process, please visit the NWL website at [www.nwlincoln.org](http://www.nwlincoln.org) or contact the office at 402-477-7181.

Size of Household	80% AMI
1	\$57,200
2	\$65,400
3	\$73,550
4	\$81,700
5	\$88,250
6	\$94,800
7	\$101,350
8	\$107,850

