

Resources for Highland Park **Homeowners Having** **Trouble Paying Their Mortgages**

The most important thing to do when you miss a mortgage payment is to call your lender as soon as possible. This is not a problem that will go away if you ignore it. The longer you wait the more likely it is that you will incur other penalties and charges. Also, do not ignore mail from your lender. If they do not hear from you they will speed up the foreclosure process.

INFORMATION LINKS

- [The Illinois Housing Development Authority - Foreclosure Q & A](#) (See "Saving My Home") and [Illinois Housing Development Authority - Saving My Home Information](#)
- Explanation of the [mortgage foreclosure](#) process and of the options to foreclosure from Illinois Pro Bono.org
- [The Illinois Statute Concerning Mortgage Foreclosure](#) (735/ILCS 5/15)
- Illinois Homeowner Helpline (866) 544-7151

LEGAL AID

Prairie State Legal Services

325 West Washington Street, Suite 100
Waukegan, Illinois 60085
Phone: (888)966-7757

- Provides free legal services for persons who have incomes below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines and for senior citizens age 60 and older regardless of income.

FORECLOSURE PREVENTION SERVICES

The following organizations are approved to provide foreclosure prevention counseling by the US Department of Housing and Development (HUD):

Lake County and North Shore Resources

Affordable Housing Corporation of Lake County

1590 S. Milwaukee Avenue, Suite 312

Libertyville, IL 60048

(847) 796-8050 ext. 12

Web: www.ahclc.org

- provide free classes and one-on-one foreclosure prevention counseling
- help in understanding foreclosure process
- work with mortgage lender and borrower to create a manageable repayment plan
- guidance in creating a crisis budget

Catholic Charities

Lake County Housing Case Management

671 S. Lewis

Waukegan, Illinois

(847) 782-4000

Web: www.catholiccharities.net/services

- provides foreclosure prevention counseling
- provides budget counseling
- offers rental assistance

Open Communities

614 Lincoln, Winnetka, IL 60093 (two blocks from the Winnetka Metra stop)

(847) 501-5760

Web: <http://open-communities.org/>

- provides free one-on-one foreclosure prevention counseling
- reviews loan documents
- acts as a liaison between borrower and lender
- aids in renegotiating loans
- helps in filing a "hardship request" for financial or medical reasons

Additional Resources

Chinese American Service League

2141 South Tan Court
Chicago, Illinois 60616
(312) 791-0418
Email: ben_lau@caslservice.org

- provides one-on-one bilingual foreclosure prevention counseling
- offers rental assistance

NACA (NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE CORPORATION OF AMERICA)

4425 West 63rd St.
Chicago, Illinois 60629
(773) 723-6222
Web: https://www.naca.com/index_main.jsp

- provides foreclosure prevention counseling

SPANISH COALITION FOR HOUSING

4037 W North Ave
Chicago, Illinois 60639
(773) 342-7575
Web: www.sc4housing.org

- aids in debt budgeting
- provides foreclosure prevention workshops and counseling
- offers rental assistance

OTHER PROGRAMS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST

Making Home Affordable

www.makinghomeaffordable.gov

- Homeowners, who qualify, can lower their monthly mortgage payments and get into more stable loans at today's low rates.
- For those homeowners for whom homeownership is no longer affordable or desirable, the program can provide a way out which avoids foreclosure.

!!! MORTGAGE RESCUE SCAMS - WARNING TO HOMEOWNERS!!!

Scam artists are targeting homeowners who are facing foreclosure. These scams involve thieves who steal people's homes and equity after promising to help save the home from foreclosure.

Scam artists often find distressed homeowners through public foreclosure notices or government offices. These scam artists make deceptive promises to save the home from foreclosure. Two common forms of deception include:

- (1) "Phantom help"- outrageous fees charged for minimal paperwork or unfulfilled promises of assistance until it is too late.
- (2) "Sale-leaseback" – homeowner surrenders title, thinking they can become a renter and buy the property back over the next few years; however, the scam artist typically sets the price so high that he is able to evict them when they are unable to make the "rent" payments, or when they are unable to afford the repurchase price. The sale-leaseback is often pitched as a loan and sometimes homeowners don't even know they are signing away title to their home.

How to Protect Yourself

- Ignore posters slapped on telephone poles, median strips and at bus stops offering foreclosure help.
- Be wary of an individual or company that tells you to transfer your property deed or title to the company.
- Do not make payments to any party other than the lender.
- Do not sign a quit claim deed without being specifically instructed by your attorney or representative to do so. Do not agree to any deal that allows you to rent the property and then buy it back at a later date.
- Do not accept an offer from somebody who wants to make good on your missed payments and take the house off your hands in exchange for documents that assigns them the surplus from the foreclosure sale.
- If you cannot afford to keep your home and decide to sell, do so through a licensed real estate agent who will help you sell the home for a fair market price.
- Do not sign anything with blank lines or spaces; information could be added later.
- Be wary of an individual or company that calls itself a "mortgage consultant," "foreclosure service," or something similar.
- Be wary of an individual or company that collects a fee before providing services to you.

- If you're not English-speaking use your own translator; do not depend on the "rescue" firm's translator or anyone else's.
- Get your own, independent attorney, rather than using the one selected by the "rescue" firm.

If you think you are a victim...

Find a consumer lawyer to represent you. Consumer lawyers can be found through the National Association of Consumer Advocates (www.nacca.net).

Contact Prairie State Legal Services at Phone: (888)966-7757

Speak to a counselor certified by HUD (www.hud.gov).

Contact the Federal Trade Commission www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/ or www.ftc.gov/bcp/menus/consumer/credit/mortgage.shtm (877) FTC-HELP or (877) 382-4357

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau www.consumerfinance.gov/complaint

Contact the Attorney General: (312) 814-3000
www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/

If the scam also involved criminal activity such as forged documents, you should contact your local law enforcement agency for possible recourse.