



Habitat
for Humanity®
of Greater Sioux Falls

HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM FAQs

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Q: My family size might change within the next 12 months; will that impact my ability to qualify?

A: It could. Your household size affects the minimum income requirement and the maximum income limit. You must fall within the income guidelines to qualify for the program. You are required to immediately report any changes to your household size. Please notify Habitat of any pending birth, adoption, foster child, immigration, new relationship (roommate, significant other, spouse), or any other additions or deletions throughout the application process. Once the change in household size has occurred, then Habitat will re-verify your ability to meet the program criteria for need and ability to pay.

Q: Do I list all my children as members of my household, even college-aged or adult children?

A: It is up to you to decide whether to list your adult children as members of your household. If they will live with you at least part-time over the next three years, then you may include them, but it is not required to include them on the application. Habitat counts the adults and children you listed on your application when calculating your household size. Household size determines how many bedrooms you need, and it determines the minimum income requirement you must meet. Please review the income guidelines as you make the decision about whether to include adult children on the application.

Q: My cousin, who is a child under the age of 18, stays with me because his/her parents' home is overcrowded. Can I claim my cousin as a member of my household?

A: No. Minor children may only be listed on the application as a household member if the applicant, co-applicant, or another adult who resides in the household is the parent, legal guardian, or legal custodian of the child. Documentation is required to verify the members of your household and their relationship to you.

Q: I am separated from my spouse. Can I apply and qualify on my own?

A: For married applicants, the spouse must be listed as a co-applicant or a member of the household, unless a divorce is in process. If a divorce is in process, the divorce must be finalized before an applicant can be recommended to the Habitat board, which is generally within six months of the application submission. SD law and Habitat policy require that both spouses sign the mortgage documents, even if only one spouse is applying for credit. Habitat requires both spouses to submit financial documentation, and both spouses must consent to a criminal background check. SD law automatically gives a non-applicant spouse homestead rights in property owned by their spouse, even if that spouse is not on the deed. For all these reasons, Habitat requires marital status issues to be resolved before an applicant can be considered for selection.

Q: Does Habitat give preference to families with a lot of children?

A: No. Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sioux Falls welcomes households of any size to apply, even households of one individual. Each year is unique for the location and sizes of homes that will be built or renovated. New construction homes are typically 2-bedroom or 4-bedroom designs. Habitat matches selected partner families to the appropriate-sized homes that best fit their needs and affordability. A 1-person household may be selected for a 2-bedroom home. A family needing a 3-bedroom home may be offered a 4-bedroom home, if no 3-bedroom homes are available. Habitat policy does not require the household to be a perfect match for the home that is assigned, but Habitat makes all lot assignment decisions.

Q: What if my household grows after I purchase a Habitat home? Can I upgrade?

A: No. If you outgrow the Habitat home, Habitat does not offer an "upgrade" into a larger Habitat home. Habitat will assign you a home that is adequate to meet the needs of your household at the time of home sale. If a household is expecting a child, Habitat policy states that children age 0-23 months can room with the parent. Habitat is a needs-based program, offering affordable homeownership and the opportunity to build wealth. The longer you stay in the Habitat home, the more equity you can build. If you purchase a Habitat home and you outgrow it, then you have the option to sell the Habitat home, per the terms of your loan agreement. You can then use any proceeds from your Habitat home sale to purchase a different home on the open market, through a traditional lending institution. Habitat cannot guarantee a "forever home," so it is up to you to think through your current situation, your future plans and the timing of your application for the Habitat program.