



Australian Government

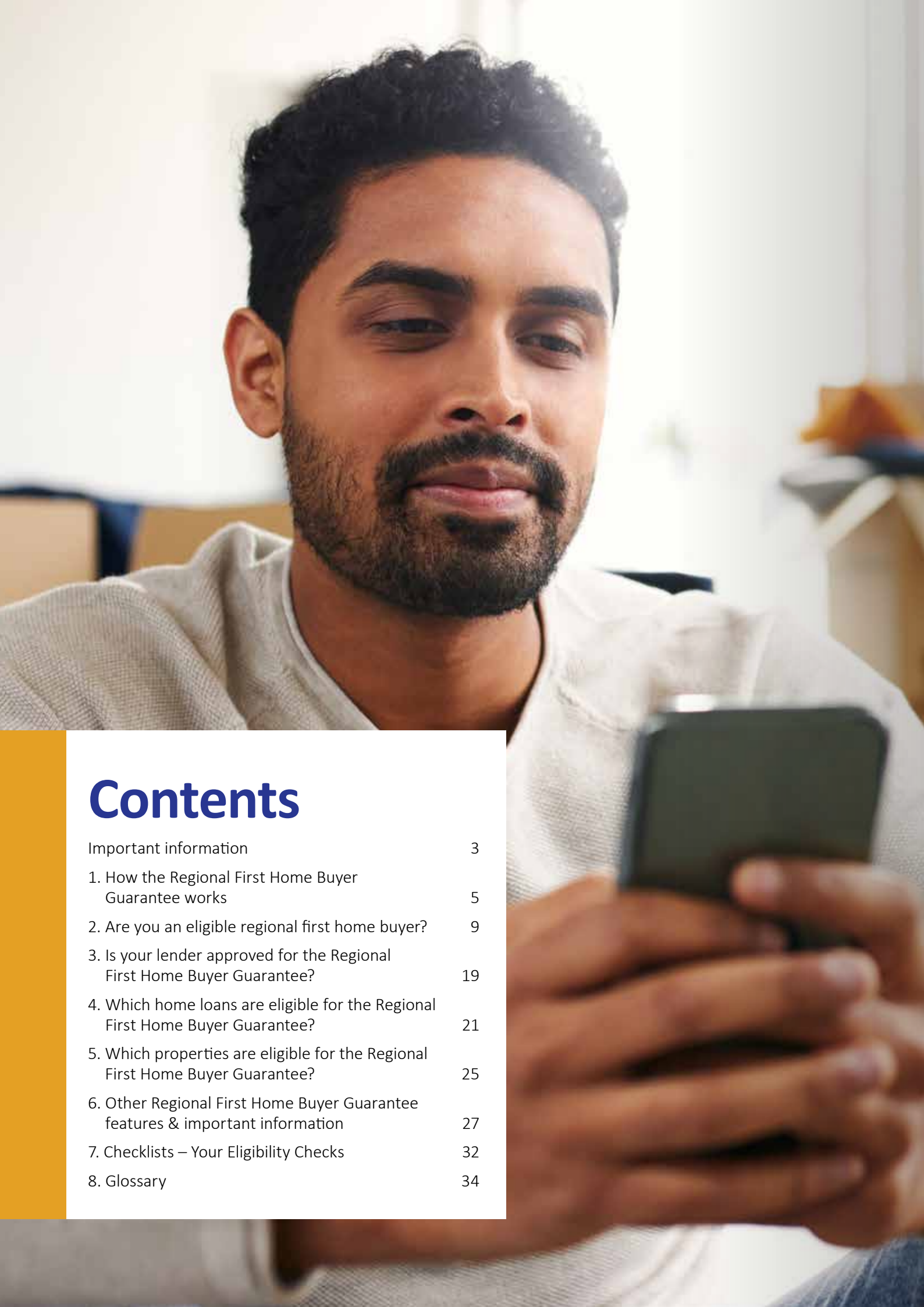
Home Guarantee Scheme

Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee



Information Guide
1 October 2022





Contents

Important information	3
1. How the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee works	5
2. Are you an eligible regional first home buyer?	9
3. Is your lender approved for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?	19
4. Which home loans are eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?	21
5. Which properties are eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?	25
6. Other Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee features & important information	27
7. Checklists – Your Eligibility Checks	32
8. Glossary	34

Important information

About this document

This document is dated 1 October 2022 and relates to the Australian Government's Home Guarantee Scheme (HGS or Scheme) and the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee (RFHBG).

It has been prepared by the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC) for Participating Lenders so that they can provide general information and guidance on the HGS or RFHBG to regional first home buyers.

Some terms used in this document have defined meanings. These terms are capitalised and are defined in the 'Glossary' section on page 34.

Distribution of this document

This document may only be distributed within Australia and in relation to Eligible Loans that are offered by Participating Lenders.

If you are receiving this document, it will have been provided to you by a Participating Lender (or by one of their Representatives).

Providing your personal information to NHFIC

You will be asked to provide personal information to NHFIC (directly or via a Participating Lender or its Representatives) if you take steps to participate in the HGS or RFHBG or submit a Home Buyer Declaration. Please read the privacy statement at section 6.4 'Other Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee features & important information – Privacy statement'. By requesting a Participating Lender to take any steps to have your home loan covered by the HGS or RFHBG or by submitting a Home Buyer Declaration to your lender you consent to the matters outlined in that privacy statement.

Providing incorrect or incomplete information

As part of its role in administering and operating the HGS, NHFIC may verify the

information provided by you (or on your behalf) in submissions for the RFHBG and in any Home Buyer Declaration. This is to ensure that you are eligible to participate in the RFHBG. You may be checked for former home ownership within Australia and checks for other matters in respect of the eligibility criteria – such as your spouse or de facto partner status (if applicable), council records, property title information and your financial particulars – may also be undertaken.

Not providing the information requested or providing incorrect or incomplete information may impact upon the assessment of your eligibility and ability to participate in the RFHBG.

If it is found that you have provided false, incorrect or misleading information under a Home Buyer Declaration and/or generally in connection with the RFHBG, criminal and civil penalties may apply. Also, if a guarantee of your home loan is found to have been issued mistakenly under the HGS or RFHBG due to your fraudulent or wilful conduct, that guarantee may be revoked and the lender may also consider it as a failure by you to comply with the terms of your home loan. If you fail to comply with the terms and conditions of your home loan, the lender will have rights against you – these rights may include requiring you to repay some or all of the home loan, requiring you to pay for lenders mortgage insurance, an ability to change or enforce the home loan and/or to take other legal action against you.

General information and guidance only

This document includes general information and guidance in relation to some of the features of the HGS and RFHBG. It should not be relied upon as being complete for any purpose.

NHFIC is only providing this document to Participating Lenders and borrowers (via

the NHFIC website). **To the fullest extent provided by law, this document does not create any legal relationship between you or any other person and NHFIC.**

The information in this document is not financial or other advice. It has been prepared without considering any person's objectives, financial situation or particular needs. This document does not relate to any products or services provided by any Participating Lender. The appointment of any person as a Participating Lender is expressly not a recommendation or statement of approval of any such person.

It is important that you read this document and all of the materials provided to you by your Participating Lender in full, and take your own professional advice as appropriate, before deciding to take any steps to have your home loan covered by the Scheme or submitting a Home Buyer Declaration.

No independent verification

No Participating Lender or Representative has independently verified any information contained in this document and each such person disclaims any responsibility for that information. No representation, warranty or undertaking (express or implied) is made, and no responsibility or liability is accepted, by any of them, in relation to the accuracy or completeness of the information in this document.

Enquiries & further information

If you have any questions about the HGS and RFHBG you should ask your Participating Lender and/or seek advice from a professional adviser.

Further information on the HGS and RFHBG is also available at [nhfic.gov.au](https://www.nhfic.gov.au).



1. How the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee works

The Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee (RFHBG) is an Australian Government initiative that aims to support eligible regional first home buyers to purchase a home sooner. Under the RFHBG, part of an eligible regional first home buyer's home loan from a Participating Lender will be guaranteed by NHFIC. This is aimed at enabling the eligible regional first home buyer to purchase a modest home with as little as a 5% deposit.

1.1 Is your home loan eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?

For your home loan to be eligible for the RFHBG there are a few checks that need to be satisfied.

They relate to:

- **living in a regional area** – you have lived in a regional area or adjacent regional area to where you are purchasing in for the preceding 12-month period to the Home Loan Date – see section 2 *'Are you an eligible regional first home buyer?'* and section 5 *'Which properties are eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?'*[^]
- **your personal circumstances** – referred to as Your Eligibility Checks, which include checks for your income, prior property ownership, citizenship, age, marital status, deposit and intention to live in the property you buy – see section 2 *'Are you an eligible regional first home buyer?'* and the checklists in section 7 *'Checklists – Your Eligibility Checks'*
- **the lender for your home loan** – which must be a Participating Lender – see section 3 *'Is your lender approved for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?'*
- **the type of home loan you are applying for** – which must be an Eligible Loan – see section 4 *'Which home loans are eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?'*, and
- **the property you intend to purchase** – which must be an Eligible Property – see section 5 *'Which properties are eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?'*.

If any one of these checks is not satisfied, you will not be able to participate in the RFHBG. Your lender will need to be satisfied that these checks are met and will have separate criteria, processes and requirements for any consideration of your home loan application with them.

The RFHBG is open across regional areas in Australia to all eligible regional first home buyers in respect of Eligible Loans. The number of places under the RFHBG is limited and a place may not be available even if your home loan is eligible. See section 1.2 *'Other key features of the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee – RFHBG place limits'* below for further details.

You should discuss with your Participating Lender whether the RFHBG is the most appropriate program offered by the Australian Government for you.

Section 8 includes a Glossary of defined terms that are used throughout this Information Guide.

[^] Australian Defence Force members may be eligible for a partial exemption and should check with their participating lender if this applies (see section 2.1.1)

1.2 Other key features of the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee

The RFHBG involves the following key features.

When the RFHBG commenced

The RFHBG commenced on 1 October 2022.

Applications to a Participating Lender to have your home loan covered by the RFHBG can only be made on or after that date.

Other relevant dates for RFHBG eligibility – such as when contracts are able to be signed and the settlement date for your loan – are described in section 4.2 *‘Which home loans are eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee? – Home loan products – Contract & settlement dates’*.

Participation in the RFHBG

You cannot apply to NHFIC directly to have your home loan participate in the RFHBG. You can only do so as part of your home loan application with a Participating Lender.

The eligibility of your home loan to participate in the RFHBG will be considered by your lender and, if eligible, the lender will notify you that your home loan is able to participate in the RFHBG. They may also take steps to make a RFHBG Place Reservation – as described in section 6.1 *‘Other Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee features & important information – Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee Place Reservations’*.

Information on how your home loan can be covered by the RFHBG can be obtained through a Participating Lender and their Representatives.

Regional area definition

A regional area is defined as:

- the Statistical Area Level 4 (ASGS SA4 2016) areas in a State or the Northern Territory that are not a capital city of that State or Territory; and
- Norfolk Island; or the Territories of Jervis Bay, Christmas Island or Cocos (Keeling) Islands;

as defined in the version published by The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in July 2016.

The greater capital city areas of each state and the Northern Territory; and the entire Australian Capital Territory are excluded from the RFHBG.

RFHBG place limits

From 1 October 2022, up to 10,000 home loans can be guaranteed under the RFHBG in any financial year (up until 30 June 2025).

Issue of guarantees under the RFHBG

If your home loan is covered by the RFHBG, NHFIC will issue a guarantee to the Participating Lender who made that loan to you.

The guarantee is not a cash payment or a deposit for your home loan.

Rather, the guarantee is a legal arrangement between NHFIC and your lender to pay up to a certain amount that you owe to your lender if you default under the terms of your home loan and your property has been sold (as further described below).

A guarantee issued under the RFHBG is not made to you, and you are not able to take any action in relation to a guarantee of your home loan under the RFHBG (if one applies).

What a guarantee covers

Any guarantee of your home loan is for up to a maximum amount of 15% of the Value (as assessed by your lender) of the property that you purchase. If you default on your home loan and after your property is sold, the guarantee will be claimed by your Participating Lender. However, it will be for a lesser amount than 15% of that assessed Value if your deposit is more than 5% of that Value.

The guarantee is only able to be claimed by the Participating Lender for amounts owing by you to them under your home loan after:

- you have defaulted on your home loan
- your property has been sold, and
- the sale proceeds (and any other amounts available to the lender) have been applied to pay the amounts you owe to your lender under the terms of your home loan.

Specifically, any guarantee of your home loan under the RFHBG will **not apply** to:

- help you make any payments on your home loan that you miss during the ordinary course of your home loan
- prevent you from defaulting on your home loan
- stop the lender from taking action against you for any default under your home loan or mortgage (including where they have rights to take possession and sell off the property),
- cover the payment of any amounts which remain to be owed by you to the lender after (1) sale proceeds and other amounts are applied to pay what you owe on your home loan and after amounts under the guarantee have been claimed and paid to the Participating Lender, or (2) if they do not make a claim under the guarantee.

Circumstances where your home loan may cease participating in the RFHBG

If your home loan is covered by the RFHBG, there are certain events which may cause the RFHBG guarantee to stop applying to your home loan. These include where:

- it is found at any time that your home loan was not eligible to participate in the RFHBG – including where it is discovered at a later time that Your Eligibility Checks were not satisfied
- you no longer live in the property unless you are an Australian Defence Force member and are unable to do so because of your duties. In this instance, your lender may require you to pay Lenders Mortgage Insurance (LMI) or significant other additional costs relating to your loan, at your own obligation.
- you have repaid your home loan in full – including where you refinance your home loan with another lender that is not a Participating Lender – see section 6.3 *‘Other Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee features & important information – Refinancing your Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee-guaranteed home loan’* for further details, or
- you have repaid your loan down to a principal balance that is 80% or less of the original Value of your property at the time of purchase – calculated based on your scheduled home loan repayments. Any amount that you prepay and can freely redraw are not counted.

There are also additional events that rely upon your agreements with, and the actions of, your Participating Lender. These include where:

- the terms of your home loan (or mortgage) are changed by your lender except for changes to the interest rate, changes made to the terms that your lender offers to all of its owner-occupied home loans, changes for where you are in financial hardship, changes between your lender's standard home loan products and other limited circumstances
- further finance is provided to you by your lender and secured against the same property (known as a 'top up')
- your loan is assigned or transferred by your lender, or
- if your lender notifies NHFIC that the guarantee may be released.

If your home loan is no longer covered by the RFHBG at an earlier time than your lender expected, you may be subject to additional fees, charges and expenses as set out in the terms of your home loan.

Other government programs

If your home loan is covered by the RFHBG, you are not restricted under the terms of the RFHBG from also accessing other government programs – like the Australian Government's First Home Super Saver Scheme or First Home Owner Grant and concessions that may be offered by State and Territory governments.

These other programs apply their own criteria and conditions, and your eligibility or participation under the RFHBG does not mean that you will definitely be eligible and able to participate under another program. You should make your own enquiries on the terms of those other programs.

You should discuss with your Participating Lender whether the RFHBG is the most appropriate guarantee for you.

1.3 Getting ready – what will I need to provide to my lender?

Your Participating Lender or their Representative will let you know what information and materials you will need to provide for your home loan application and any participation of your home loan under the RFHBG.

However, the following information will need to be submitted by your lender in connection with the initial RFHBG Place Reservation process. It is recommended that you collect and have this information available when you first contact your lender (directly or through their Representative):

- ✓ your full name and date of birth
- ✓ your Medicare number (including your position on your card)
- ✓ your Notice of Assessment for your taxable income for the 2021-22 income year – see section 2.1.3 '*Are you an eligible regional first home buyer? – What was your taxable income for the preceding income year? (Income test)*', and
- ✓ other details to assist the lender to assess whether you will be eligible to participate in the RFHBG – your lender will confirm what these are.

If you do not have a Medicare number, or have not been issued with a Notice of Assessment for your taxable income (because you did not earn taxable income above the tax-free threshold), your lender will confirm what other information will be required to be provided by you in your circumstances.



2. Are you an eligible regional first home buyer?

2.1 Your Eligibility Checks

First, you should consider whether your personal circumstances satisfy all of the following checks. They relate to your eligibility as a regional first home buyer who can participate in the RFHBG.

The key checks for your personal circumstances are:

- ✓ living and purchasing in a regional area – see sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2
- ✓ an income test – see section 2.1.3
- ✓ a prior property ownership test – see section 2.1.4
- ✓ a citizenship test – see section 2.1.5
- ✓ a minimum age test – see section 2.1.6
- ✓ a deposit requirement – see section 2.1.7
- ✓ an owner-occupier requirement – see section 2.1.8, and
- ✓ others – see section 2.1.9

Some of these checks may differ depending on whether you are applying for a home loan as a single, as part of a couple or whether you are an Australian Defence Force member.

If you do not satisfy any one of these checks – which are described in further detail below and are together referred to as **Your Eligibility Checks** – you should not ask your lender to take any steps to have your home loan participate in the RFHBG. This includes that you should not ask your lender to make a RFHBG Place Reservation. If you are unsure of any of these matters, you should ask your lender or seek your own independent financial and legal advice.

Section 7 '*Checklists – Your Eligibility Checks*' includes checklists that are provided to help you to record your answers as you consider the questions for each of Your Eligibility Checks.

If you are eligible for the RFHBG, you are not eligible for the First Home Guarantee. Home buyers who are not eligible for the RFHBG, may be eligible for the First Home Guarantee or the Family Home Guarantee.

To find out more about your eligibility, try the **Eligibility Tool** at nhfc.gov.au

2.1.1 Are you a regional first home buyer?

You will only be eligible to participate if:

- at least one borrower under your loan agreement has lived in the regional area or adjacent regional area they are purchasing in for the preceding 12-month period to the Home Loan Date.

For Australian Defence Force members, you may be eligible if:

- at least one borrower under your loan agreement has during part of the preceding 12-month period to the Home Loan Date, lived in the regional area or adjacent regional area they are purchasing in; and
- throughout the rest of the period the borrower has been unable to live in the regional area or the adjacent regional area because of a posting required in the course of performing their duties as a member of the Australian Defence Force (other than as a member of the Reserves).

Please talk to your participating lender about the information they will require under their lending policy to verify your eligibility. This information may include one of the following:

- a copy of utility notices for the preceding 12 month period
- a copy of a rental agreement for the preceding 12 month period
- a copy of your recent Notices of Assessment where this can validate residence over the preceding 12 month period; and
- where applicable and if the borrower is a member of the Australian Defence Force, an official statement confirming any posting required in the course of the person performing their duties over the preceding 12 months.

To help you identify whether you live in a regional area, and where you may be able to purchase, you can use the **Regional Checker** at nhfic.gov.au

Scenario 1 - De facto couple eligible for the RFHBG

A de facto couple are applying for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee to purchase in Orange (NSW) and they satisfy all eligibility requirements of the Guarantee. One applicant lived in Orange for the preceding 14 months to the Home Loan Date, whilst the other applicant lived in Orange for the preceding 5 months. The de facto couple are eligible for the RFHBG because one borrower has lived in the region they are purchasing in for the preceding 12 month period. Importantly, both borrowers met all other eligibility requirements as well.

Scenario 2 - Single applicant eligible for the RFHBG

*A single person is applying for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee to purchase in Townsville (QLD) and satisfies all requirements of the Guarantee. The applicant has lived in an adjacent regional area to Townsville for 18 months preceding the Home Loan Date. The applicant is eligible for the RFHBG as they have satisfied the requirement to have lived in the region (or an adjacent region) they are purchasing in for the preceding 12 month period. Importantly, **they met all other requirements** and had validated with their lender that the region they were purchasing in was classified as a regional centre or regional area.*

Scenario 3 - De facto couple NOT eligible for the RFHBG

A de facto couple are applying for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee to purchase in Geelong (VIC) and are discussing with their lender whether they satisfy all requirements of the Guarantee. One applicant lived in Geelong for the preceding 8 months to the Home Loan Date and the other lived in Melbourne for the past 5 years. The de facto couple are not eligible for the RFHBG because neither borrower has lived in the region they are purchasing in for the preceding 12 month period to the Home Loan Date. They discussed their scenario with their participating lender, who then provided lending options to suit their needs. For example, they may have been eligible for another Government Guarantee or they could wait a further 4 months for the applicant living in Geelong to meet the 12 month requirement for the RFHBG.

2.1.2 Are you purchasing your first home in a regional area on your own or with another person?

The RFHBG is open to singles or couples.

You will only be able to participate as a single or as part of a couple – it is not possible for a guarantee under the RFHBG to apply to more than one home loan arrangement involving you.

Singles

If you are looking to purchase your first home in a regional area as the only person named as a borrower in your home loan, then you would apply under the RFHBG **as a single**.

This means that you need to satisfy each of the checks by reference to your own circumstances. Matters for couples (such as the combined income test) will not apply to you.

Couples

If you are looking to purchase your first home in a regional area with your spouse or de facto partner, where you are both named as borrowers in your home loan, then you would both apply under the RFHBG **as a couple**.

This means that you need to satisfy each of the checks by reference to your combined circumstances and apply together. Matters for singles (such as the individual income test) will not apply to you. For 2.1.1, only one borrower under your home loan agreement has to have met the requirement for the preceding 12 month period (as at the Home Loan Date), having lived in the regional area being purchased in or an adjacent regional area to the regional area being purchased in.

If you are unsure of whether your relationship with another person is as de facto partner (under Australian law), you should ask your lender or seek your own professional advice.

Arrangements with other people that do not qualify

If you are intending to enter into a home loan that:

- has 2 borrowers, but the other person is not also your spouse or de facto partner, or
- has 3 or more borrowers, even if one of the other borrowers is also your spouse or de facto partner,

then that home loan will not be eligible for the RFHBG.

For example, a loan arrangement with a relative – such as with a sibling – will **not** be eligible for the RFHBG.



Questions to ask yourself

Q. Will you be applying under the RFHBG as a single or as part of a couple?

As a single

If your answer is '**as a single**', then you should pay close attention to the checks that apply for singles and disregard the matters that apply for couples.

As part of a couple

If your answer is '**as part of a couple**', then:

- you will need to be able to provide evidence to your lender that confirms your relationship
- you will need to have one borrower under your home loan agreement provide evidence as per your Participating Lender's own requirements for having lived in the regional area being purchased in or an adjacent regional area to the regional area being purchased in, for the preceding 12 month period (as at the Home Loan Date)
- you will need to apply for a home loan together, and
- you should pay close attention to the checks that apply for couples and disregard the matters that apply only for singles.

2.1.3 What was your taxable income for the preceding income year? (*Income test*)

The RFHBG includes an income test.

To satisfy this test:

- for **singles** – your taxable income for the previous income year must not be more than \$125,000, or
- for **couples** – your combined taxable income for the previous income year must not be more than \$200,000.

For all RFHBG place applications made from 1 October 2022 up to 30 June 2023, the relevant income year will be the 2021-22 financial year. Income from previous financial years is not able to be considered for the income test.

The income test is assessed by your lender:

- at your Home Loan Date, and
- using your taxable income (as per the *Income Tax Assessment Act*) from the previous income year, as shown on your Notice of Assessment (issued to you by the Australian Taxation Office).

Each income year starts on 1 July in a calendar year and ends on 30 June in the next calendar year – so if you enter into a home loan agreement with your lender between 1 October 2022 and 30 June 2023, you would need to be able to provide your income tax assessment notice for the 2021-22 financial year.

If you are applying under the RFHBG:

- '**as a single**', then you will need to satisfy the income test for singles, or
- '**as part of a couple**', then together you will need to satisfy the combined income test for couples. This will be the only income test you need to satisfy – so you can disregard the income test for singles – and you will need to be able to show your lender copies of a Notice of Assessment for each of you and your spouse or de facto partner.



Before you enter into a home loan agreement, you should consider talking with your lender (or broker) about the potential implications of changing interest rates or house prices on your individual circumstances.



Questions to ask yourself

Q1. Do you have your Notice of Assessment for the 2021-22 income year (as issued by the Australian Taxation Office)?

No, I don't have it (or I can't find it)

If your answer to the above question is '**no**', you may not be able to satisfy the income test.

You would need to take steps to file for or obtain a copy of your Notice of Assessment for the 2021-22 income year. Doing so does not necessarily qualify you as being able to participate in the RFHBG and any action you decide to take is your own responsibility.

If you did not receive a Notice of Assessment because your taxable income is below the tax-free threshold in the relevant income year, you will need to confirm with your lender what information you would need to provide.

Yes, I do

If your answer is '**yes**' to the above question, you will need to be able to show a copy of your Notice of Assessment to your lender.

The next question for you is below.

Q2. Do you satisfy the income test?

No, I / we don't satisfy the income test

If your answer to the above question is '**no**', your home loan will not be eligible under the RFHBG.

Yes, I / we satisfy the income test

If your answer is '**yes**' to the above question, your home loan may be eligible for the RFHBG.

2.1.4 Have you ever held an interest in property in Australia? (Prior property ownership test)

It is important that the RFHBG assists genuine eligible regional first home buyers.

The prior property ownership test for you being an eligible regional first home buyer for the RFHBG is that you have **not ever held**:

- a freehold interest in real property in Australia (this includes owning land only)
- an interest in a lease of land in Australia with a term of 50 years (or more), or
- a company title interest in land in Australia.

These tests apply for property interests in all States and Territories of Australia, regardless of whether the property was residential or commercial property, for investment or owner-occupied purposes and whether or not it was ever lived in.

They also apply to you whether or not any of the interests listed above have been held by you on your own or together with someone else – for example, where you held an interest in property with a former spouse or de facto partner.

What this means is that, if you are applying under the RFHBG:

- '**as a single**', then only you, individually, will need to satisfy the prior property ownership test, or
- '**as part of a couple**', then you will both need to satisfy the prior property ownership test.

Note that if either of you – whether individually or with someone else – have held any of the interests listed in the test, you do not satisfy the prior property ownership test as a couple.

For your home loan to participate in the RFHBG, you will need to make a statutory declaration that confirms you have not held any interests of this kind. This declaration is made under the Home Buyer Declaration.

In addition, your lender, NHFIC and others may conduct independent checks on whether or not you have held any such interests in Australia at any time. They may do this at any time – including after you have signed a contract of sale or paid a deposit in relation to a property and after your home loan has been advanced.

If you are unsure of whether or not you have held any of the kinds of interests listed above you should ask a professional adviser, as you will need to be sure that you are not giving a false declaration.



Questions to ask yourself

Q3. Will you satisfy the prior property ownership test at your Home Loan Date?

You should check this against each of the three types of property interest holdings that could restrict you from being eligible.

For couples, each of you must satisfy the no prior property ownership test.

No, I have held an interest in property

If your answer to the above question is ‘**no**’, you will not be able to satisfy the prior property ownership test.

Your home loan – as a single or as part of a couple – will not be eligible to participate under the FHBG.

Yes, I do, because I don’t hold an interest in property (and, for couples, neither has my spouse or de facto partner)

If your answer to the above question is ‘**yes**’, you will be able to make the necessary declarations and satisfy the prior property ownership test.

2.1.5 Are you an Australian citizen? (*Citizenship test*)

The RFHBG is only open to Australian citizens.

The citizenship test for the RFHBG is that you will need to be an Australian citizen at your Home Loan Date.

If you are applying under the RFHBG:

- ‘**as a single**’, then only you, individually, will need to satisfy the citizenship test, or
- ‘**as part of a couple**’, then you will both need to satisfy the citizenship test.

You **will not satisfy** the citizenship if at the Home Loan Date:

- you are a permanent resident of Australia or a New Zealand citizen (and not an Australian citizen)
- you are the spouse or de facto partner of an Australian citizen, but are not yourself an Australian citizen
- you were formerly an Australian citizen, but have not resumed your citizenship, or
- you have applied for, are eligible for, or have received notice of a positive decision of Australian citizenship, but have not received your citizenship certificate.



Questions to ask yourself

Q4. Will you be an Australian citizen at your Home Loan Date?

For couples, each of you must satisfy the Australian citizenship test.

No, I will not be

If your answer to the above question is ‘**no**’, you will not be able to satisfy the citizenship test.

Your home loan – as a single or as part of a couple – will not be eligible to participate under the RFHBG.

Yes, I will be (and, for couples, so will my spouse or de facto partner)

If your answer to the above question is ‘**yes**’, you will be able to make the Home Buyer Declaration and satisfy the citizenship test.



2.1.6 Are you 18 years or older? (Minimum age test)

The RFHBG is only open to persons who are 18 years of age or over.

The minimum age test for the RFHBG is that you will need to be 18 years of age or over at your Home Loan Date.

If you are applying under the RFHBG:

- **‘as a single’**, then only you, individually, will need to satisfy the minimum age test, or
- **‘as part of a couple’**, then you will both need to satisfy the minimum age test.



Questions to ask yourself

Q5. Will you be 18 years or over at your Home Loan Date?

For couples, the answer must be **‘yes’** for both of you.

No, I will not be

If your answer to the above question is **‘no’**, you will not be able to satisfy the minimum age test.

Your home loan – as a single or as part of a couple – will not be eligible to participate under the RFHBG.

Yes, I will be

If your answer to the above question is **‘yes’**, you will be able to make the necessary declarations and satisfy the minimum age test.

2.1.7 Do you have a deposit of at least 5% of the value of the property (but less than 20%)? (Deposit requirement)

There is a minimum and maximum deposit requirement for the RFHBG.

Your Participating Lender will be able to tell you if you satisfy this requirement.

The RFHBG is to assist singles and couples who have at least 5% of the Value of an eligible property saved as a deposit. It is a requirement of the RFHBG that you use the maximum amount of your savings as possible towards your deposit (subject to the policies of your lender and your financial circumstances). If you have 20% or more saved, then your home loan will not be covered by the RFHBG.

As the RFHBG is aimed at helping eligible regional first home buyers who have these features, it is important that you do not try to disadvantage other Australians by seeking to change your circumstances just to take advantage of the RFHBG. This includes where you have a 20% or greater deposit and legally transfer your cash and other assets in order only to access the RFHBG, or where your 5% deposit has not been genuinely saved by you and is being provided to you only so that you can qualify for the RFHBG.

Participating Lenders must comply with responsible lending practices – if you have any questions about these requirements in the context of the RFHBG, please discuss these with your Participating Lender directly.

You should confirm with your Participating Lender whether any cash grants under other Australian Government, State or Territory schemes or programs you may receive can be considered as part of genuine savings by that Participating Lender.



Questions to ask yourself

Q6. Do you have a deposit of between 5% and 20% of the value of the property you would like to purchase?

For couples, your answer should refer to your combined circumstances.

No, I won't – I'll have less than the 5% minimum or more than the 20% maximum

If your answer to the above question is '**no**', you will not be able to satisfy the deposit requirement. Your home loan – as a single or as part of a couple – will not be eligible to participate under the RFHBG.

Yes, I do or will (and, for couples, this is together with my spouse or de facto partner)

If your answer to the above question is '**yes**', you will be able to make the necessary declarations and satisfy the deposit requirement.

2.1.8 Will you live in the property you purchase as an owner-occupier? (Owner-occupier requirement)

The RFHBG assists Australians to purchase their first home in a regional area. Investment properties are not being supported by the RFHBG.

Under your Home Buyer Declaration, you will need to declare that you intend to:

- start living in the Eligible Property you purchase within 6 months from either the settlement date of your loan or, for new builds, the date an occupancy certificate is issued, and
- continue to live in that property for as long as your home loan has a guarantee under the RFHBG unless you are an Australian Defence Force member and the Australian Defence Force owner-occupier exemption applies (see below).

An exemption from the owner-occupier requirement applies where you are an Australian Defence Force member and are unable to satisfy this requirement because of a posting required in the course of your duties as an Australian Defence Force member provided, at the Home Loan Date, you intended to live in the property (**Australian Defence Force owner-occupier exemption**). The Australian Defence Force owner-occupier exemption does not extend to persons who are not a borrower under your loan. If you apply as a single under the RFHBG but have a spouse or de facto, you will not be able to claim the Australian Defence Force owner-occupier exemption if your spouse or de facto is an Australian Defence Force member and you are unable to reside at the Eligible Property because of a posting arising in the course of their duties as an Australian Defence Force member.

If you are applying under the FHBG:

- '**as a single**', then only you, individually, will need to satisfy the owner-occupier requirement unless the Australian Defence Force owner-occupier exemption applies to you, or
- '**as part of a couple**', then you will both need to satisfy the owner-occupier requirement unless the Australian Defence Force owner-occupier exemption applies to either one or both of you.

If you don't live in your property – including where you move out of the property at a later time – your home loan may cease to be guaranteed by the RFHBG.

In these circumstances there may be terms of your home loan that require you to take certain actions – including that you may need to pay fees and charges and/or take out lenders mortgage insurance that would not have otherwise applied if your home loan was eligible under the RFHBG.



Questions to ask yourself

Q7. Do you intend to reside in the property you purchase as an owner-occupier while your home loan is guaranteed under the RFHBG?

No, I don't (or I don't think I will)

If your answer to the above question is '**no**', you will not be able to satisfy the owner-occupier requirement.

Your home loan – as a single or as part of a couple – will not be eligible to participate under the RFHBG.

Yes, I do intend to live in the property as an owner-occupier

If your answer to the above question is '**yes**', you will be able to make the Home Buyer Declaration and satisfy the owner-occupier requirement.

For couples, the answer must be '**yes**' for both of you.

2.1.9 Are there any matters that could disqualify you from being an eligible regional first home buyer?

This is a final check to make sure that you don't provide any incorrect, untrue or misleading information nor make any false declarations in relation to your personal circumstances. It is not an additional criteria, and is included only to make sure you have considered all possible matters and are aware of the possible consequences for providing untrue, incorrect, misleading or false information or materials.

You should consider all of the above checks carefully. If you are unsure of any matter relating to your circumstances, or (for couples) those of your spouse or de facto partner, you should speak to your lender and/or ask your professional adviser(s).

If your Participating Lender takes any action for your home loan to be covered by the RFHBG – including making RFHBG Place Reservations or seeking to have a guarantee apply for your home loan – you will need to provide information to them and make a statutory declaration.

This information and declarations you make may be investigated at future times. You need to be certain that you are giving true and correct information and make a true statutory declaration.

If your information and/or statutory declaration are found to be untrue, incorrect, misleading or false – including at a later time after you have paid a deposit or the full purchase price on your property – there may be significant consequences.

These may include that:

- legal action is taken against you – including for criminal penalties and civil actions
- your home loan is not covered by the RFHBG, and/or
- there are terms of your home loan that require you to take certain actions – including you may need to pay fees and charges and/or take out lenders mortgage insurance that would not have otherwise applied if your home loan was covered by the RFHBG.

You should understand the terms of your home loan carefully so that you know what would happen under your home loan if this were to happen.



Questions to ask yourself

Q8. Are you sure there are no matters in your personal circumstances that could mean you aren't eligible for the RFHBG?

No, I'm not sure

If your answer to the above question is '**no**', you could risk significant consequences if you give incorrect, untrue or misleading information or make a false statutory declaration.

You should speak to your lender and/or ask your independent financial and/or legal adviser(s).

Yes, I am sure

If your answer to the above question is '**yes**', you will be able to make the Home Buyer Declaration and satisfy the regional first home buyer test.

You should note that all information and declarations provided by you are able to be investigated at any time.



3. Is your lender approved for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?

3.1 Participating Lenders

The RFHBG is only open to Eligible Loans that are made by Participating Lenders. For a lender to be a Participating Lender under the RFHBG they must have been approved by NHFIC.

A listing of these Participating Lenders is on [nhfic.gov.au](https://www.nhfic.gov.au). Even if you are told that a particular institution is a Participating Lender, you should check that they are listed on [nhfic.gov.au](https://www.nhfic.gov.au).

Participating Lenders may offer Eligible Loans themselves or via Representatives. If you are unsure whether any institution or person is a Representative of a Participating Lender, you should contact the lender directly to ask.

3.2 Your home loan application and your relationship with your lender

You are able to apply for finance for your home loan from more than one Participating Lender. The terms of your home loan will be agreed between you and your lender.

NHFIC will not be involved in any home loan application procedures, assessments or approvals nor the administration or management of your home loan (including in circumstances of default and enforcement).

See section 4 '*Which home loans are eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?*' for further details on which home loans qualify as Eligible Loans.

3.3 What if I have a complaint about my lender?

General complaints about your lender should be made to your lender and/or any relevant complaints authority.

If you are not sure who the relevant Complaints Authority is, contact the Australian Financial Complaints Authority at [afca.org.au](https://www.afca.org.au).





4. Which home loans are eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?

4.1 Eligible Loans

Not all home loans are eligible for the RFHBG.

The RFHBG is restricted to '*Eligible Loans*', which are home loans:

- made by Participating Lenders to eligible regional home buyers, and
- that are for the purchase of an Eligible Property that is to be occupied by you as the owner – see section 5 '*Which properties are eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?*' for further information.

There are additional requirements that apply in relation to these home loans that rely upon the terms that you agree with your Participating Lender. These include that your home loan will need to be for a term of 30 years or less, have regular repayments of principal (with limited exceptions for interest-only loans, which mainly relate to construction lending), include a mortgage over your purchased property, be in Australian dollars, have appropriate lending limits to recognise the RFHBG's deposit requirements, settle after your lender commences as a Participating Lender under the RFHBG and comply with relevant laws and your lender's own policies. Your Participating Lender will need to ensure that the terms of your home loan arrangement comply with these matters.

4.2 Home loan products

The RFHBG permits certain categories of home loan products to take the benefit of the RFHBG. These general categories relate to home loans for:

- the purchase of an established dwelling
- a house and land package
- a land and separate contract to build a home, and
- an 'off-the-plan' purchase.

If you are intending to buy vacant land and construct a dwelling on that land, you will need to enter into a building contract to build a home on the land within six months of the loan settlement date for the eligible loan to acquire the land.

If you already own vacant land and intend to take a new home loan to construct a dwelling on that land, your home loan is not eligible for the RFHBG. This is because you do not satisfy the property ownership test.

You will need to contact your lender to clarify whether your home loan is eligible under the RFHBG.

The conditions under the RFHBG for home loan product categories that may be Eligible Loans are as follows.

Contract & settlement dates

To be eligible for the RFHBG, the contract of sale and (if applicable) eligible building contract may have particular dates when they can be signed by you (all as described further below). There are no exceptions from these required dates.

Purchase of existing dwelling

If you are purchasing an existing dwelling:

- you must move into the property within 6 months of the settlement of your home loan, and
- the property must be purchased under a contract of sale that you sign on or after 1 October 2022.

This category does not include 'off-the-plan' purchases, which are described below.

House and land packages

A house and land package is where you build a home by entering into a contract of sale to purchase land from the same person (or persons within the same corporate group) as the person who you enter into a contract with to build your home.

For a house and land package, prior to the settlement date for your home loan you will need to have entered into:

- a contract of sale for the land, and
- an eligible building contract to build your home on that land.

These can either be in the same contract or two separate contracts. Your home loan will also include a requirement for you to:

- start building your home within 12 months, and
- finish building your home within 24 months of the settlement date for your home loan.

You will also need to move into the property within 6 months of an occupancy certificate being issued.

Land and separate contract to build a home

A land and separate contract to build a home is where you build a home by entering into a contract of sale to acquire land from a person who is different to the person you enter into a contract with to build your home.

For a land and separate contract to build a home, you will need to have entered into a contract of sale to acquire the land under a contract of sale or, an eligible lease instrument. You will also need to move into the property within 6 months of an occupancy certificate being issued.

You may obtain a home loan to buy the land and finance the building of your home. If you do so, then your Participating Lender will require you to enter into an eligible building contract before the settlement of your home loan and:

- start building your home within 12 months, and
- finish building your home within 24 months of the settlement date for your home loan.

You may be able to obtain a home loan to buy the land before obtaining a loan to finance the building of your home. If you do so, then your Participating Lender will require you to:

- enter into an eligible building contract within 6 months,
- start building your home within 12 months, and
- finish building your home within 24 months, of the settlement date of your home loan to buy the land.

If you choose to buy the land before obtaining a loan to finance the building of your home, you will need to ensure that at the time your loan agreement is entered into to finance the building of your home, the purchase price for your land and the cost to build your home does not exceed the price cap that is applicable to your property. If they do exceed the price cap, then your home loan will not be eligible for the RFHBG and your Participating Lender may require you to obtain lenders mortgage insurance or provide a higher deposit to continue with your home loan.

If you are considering entering into contracts relating to purchasing land and for the construction of a home, you may wish to discuss with your Participating Lender (and broker, if applicable) all of the potential risks that may be associated with these transactions. It is worth noting that you are required to sign a fixed price building contract, and that any amendments to this after signing, may impact the validity of the Guarantee and your bank may require you to pay Lenders Mortgage Insurance (LMI) or fund these additional costs yourself.

‘Off-the-plan’ purchases

If you are making an ‘off-the-plan’ purchase:

- you must have signed the contract of sale before the settlement date for your home loan, and
- the settlement date for your home loan must occur within **90 days** that your home loan becomes guaranteed under the RFHBG.

You will also need to move into the property within 6 months of the settlement date for your home loan.

Eligible building contracts

For a building contract to be eligible under the RFHBG it must:

- be with a licensed or registered builder; and
- specify a fixed price for the construction of the dwelling.

'Owner builder' contracts **are not** eligible building contracts for the RFHBG.



Participating Lenders may, or may not, offer these types of home loan products. Even if they do offer these products, the terms of the home loan may be more limited than described above. You should contact your lender and/or ask your professional adviser(s) about the home loan products that are offered and whether they suit the purchase you are intending to make.

Participating Lenders require your land to be titled prior to the issuance of a NHFIC guarantee, therefore the land will need to be titled before the end of your 90 day pre-approval period.





5. Which properties are eligible for the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee?

5.1 Eligible Properties

Not all properties are eligible for the RFHBG.

The key eligibility checks for any property that you want to purchase are that:

- the property is located in a regional area that is the same or adjacent to a regional area to where you have lived for the preceding 12 months to the Home Loan Date
- it is a 'residential property' – under the RFHBG this term has the same meaning as under the National Consumer Credit Protection Act, and you should ask your lender if there is any doubt
- the purchase price of the property is under the price cap for its location – see section 5.2 '*Property price caps*'
- the property is (1) an established dwelling, or (2) a new-build dwelling that you purchase under a house and land package, a land and separate contract to build a home or an 'off-the-plan' arrangement that is financed under an Eligible Loan – see section 4 '*Which home loans are eligible for the First Home Guarantee?*' for further details, and
- at the settlement date for your home loan, the borrower(s) will be the sole registered owner of the property.

5.2 Property price caps

The price caps are summarised in the tables below. Your lender will be able to confirm which price cap is applicable to your property by its street address and suburb. If the purchase price, or in the case of a new build, land and separate contract to build home, the purchase price and construction costs, for your property is more than the price cap for its location (as listed in the table over the page), the property will **not be eligible** for the RFHBG. Note the greater capital city areas of each state and the Northern Territory; and the entire Australian Capital Territory are excluded from the RFHBG.

State	Regional centre*	All other regional areas
New South Wales	\$900,000	\$750,000
Victoria	\$800,000	\$650,000
Queensland	\$700,000	\$550,000
Western Australia		\$450,000
South Australia		\$450,000
Tasmania		\$450,000

Territory	All areas
ACT	Not applicable
NT Regional	\$600,000
Jervis Bay Territory & Norfolk Island	\$550,000
Christmas Island & Cocos (Keeling) Islands	\$400,000

* Regional centres are Newcastle and Lake Macquarie, Illawarra, Geelong, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast.

A postcode look-up tool is available at [nhfc.gov.au](https://www.nhfc.gov.au) for general information on price caps per each different Guarantee available under the Home Guarantee Scheme in a particular area. You are able to use this tool to get an idea of whether a property is in a particular price cap area. However, you should not rely upon the information provided by the tool and must confirm the price cap for any property you are thinking about purchasing with your lender.

A **Regional Checker** is also available at [nhfc.gov.au](https://www.nhfc.gov.au) to assist confirming whether you live in a regional area, and what postcodes you may be able to purchase in.



6. Other Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee features & important information

6.1 Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee Place Reservations

Depending upon your circumstances, your Participating Lender may be able to reserve a place under the RFHBG in conjunction with you making your home loan application. Requests for RFHBG Place Reservations can only be made by Participating Lenders.

A RFHBG Place Reservation does not guarantee that your home loan will participate in the RFHBG. There are other checks and timing requirements that apply before your home loan is able to be guaranteed under the RFHBG.

If your Participating Lender elects to reserve a place under the RFHBG in conjunction with you making your home loan application, the following steps apply.

Your initial home loan application

Your Participating Lender will be able to make a RFHBG Place Reservation for up to **14 days** while your lender assesses your finance application.

This reservation:

- is made by a Participating Lender at the same time as your home loan application is made or is being assessed, and you will need to provide them with some personal information to get this to happen – see section 1.3 ‘Getting ready – what will I need to provide to my lender?’
- is for a set period (usually, 14 days but your lender will advise you if the period is different) from when it is first made by any Participating Lender – you can make home loan applications to more than one Participating Lender in this period, but the 14-day reservation is counted from the day when the first lender makes the reservation – see Scenario 1 below for an illustration of how this works
- will be able to be extended by your lender if finance pre-approval is given for your home loan – see ‘Getting finance pre-approval’ below, and
- will expire if (1) you are not pre-approved for finance from a Participating Lender during this period, or (2) if you are pre-approved for finance and your lender does not let NHFIC know to extend the reservation by the end of the 14-day period.

Scenario 1 – initial reservation

Annabel makes a home loan inquiry with Lender A on 1 October 2022, and Lender A makes an initial RFHBG Place Reservation on that date. The reservation period for Annabel and her home loan is open for 14 days and will expire at 11.59 pm (Sydney time) on 15 October 2022. This will be the expiry time for all RFHBG Place Reservations that are submitted for Annabel’s home loan applications by Participating Lenders in that reservation period.

She also makes another home loan application with Lender B on 5 October 2022 and Lender B makes another initial RFHBG Place Reservation on that date. The reservation period for Annabel and her home loan is already open and so Lender B has 10 days to take necessary actions before the period expires.

For the reservation to be extended (see ‘Getting finance preapproval’ below), Lender A or Lender B will need to provide finance pre-approval to Annabel and take the necessary action to extend the reservation before the expiry time of 11.59 pm (Sydney time) on 15 October 2022.

Getting finance pre-approval

If your lender has given you a finance pre-approval, your RFHBG Place Reservation can be extended for a further **90 days** (starting on the first date that it is extended by a Participating Lender) – see Scenario 2 below for a further illustration of how this works.

This further reservation period is to allow you to find and sign a contract of sale for an Eligible Property that you want to buy.

If during this 90-day reservation period:

- you are unable to find an Eligible Property that you want to buy, or
- your lender withdraws your finance pre-approval or believes that you are not likely to enter into a home loan for an Eligible Property, the RFHBG Place Reservation for your home loan will expire.

Scenario 2 – pre-approval reservation

In considering Annabel's home loan application, Lender A provides her with a finance pre-approval on 14 October 2022 and takes the necessary steps to extend the RFHBG Place Reservation for her home loan on that date. The RFHBG Place Reservation is then extended by 90 days from the day that Lender A takes those steps. This extension will apply for both Lender A and Lender B, to now expire at 11.59 pm on 12 January 2023.

Lender B does not provide Annabel with pre-approval before the expiry time for the initial reservation but because Lender A has extended her RFHBG Place Reservation, Lender B will have until 11.59 pm on 12 January 2023 to provide Annabel with finance pre-approval.

Signing your contract for sale

Once you have signed a contract for sale to purchase an Eligible Property, your RFHBG Place Reservation can be extended for an additional **30 days** from the signing date.

This additional period is to enable you and your lender to finalise the paperwork and checks for your home loan. Your lender may ask you to provide information and materials in a shorter period than the 30 days.

To ensure that this extension applies, you will need to tell your lender immediately once you have signed your contract for sale so that your lender can notify NHFIC.

If you are unable to finalise your loan within this period, the RFHBG Place Reservation for your home loan will expire.

Before entering into a contract of sale, you should consider discussing your lending needs with your relevant Participating Lender, broker or finance professional.

You should also consider discussing the impacts of any amendments to this contract after signing, and how they may potentially impact your RFHBG place.



What happens if a reservation expires

If any reservation period expires without being extended, the RFHBG Place Reservation for your home loan will lapse and your Participating Lender would need to make a new reservation under the RFHBG.

With the number of places under the RFHBG being limited, there may not be a place under the RFHBG that is available to be reserved or taken up at that later time and you may need to wait until the next financial year to apply for a place.

In all circumstances, the decision to enter into a home loan arrangement with a Participating Lender, and the choice of property to purchase, is your own responsibility. Even though the availability of the RFHBG for home loans is limited – by number of places and the time periods for the reservation process – you should seek your own independent financial and legal advice as to whether a particular home loan or property, and the terms of the RFHBG suit your personal circumstances and objectives.

6.2 Home Buyer Declaration

A Home Buyer Declaration is provided to you by a Participating Lender for the purposes of them applying to NHFIC for your home loan to be covered by the RFHBG. You must sign and submit your Home Buyer Declaration to your lender in accordance with their instructions.

NHFIC will not take any action or steps in relation to a Home Buyer Declaration that is delivered to it by any person (including you) or institution that is not a Participating Lender (or a Representative or agent of it).

It is recommended that you provide the completed and signed declaration to your lender as soon as possible. A copy of this declaration will also be provided by your lender to NHFIC, who will retain the copy as a record.

You should be aware that this form is separate to (1) your application for a home loan from your lender, and (2) any forms that you are required to submit in relation to any other home buyer schemes or programs.

Before completing a Home Buyer Declaration, you should carefully read all sections and information contained in the form and ask your lender and/or your professional adviser(s) if anything is unclear.

You must ensure that all information contained in your Home Buyer Declaration is complete and correct. If you are unsure about any of your obligations or information that is required as part of any application for your home loan to be covered by the RFHBG it is important that you contact your lender for clarification.

You must notify your lender if you believe that you cease at any time to meet the eligibility requirements of the RFHBG or if there is any change to the information provided in the Home Buyer Declaration after you have signed and submitted it.

Penalties may apply for a false Home Buyer declaration.

6.3 Refinancing your Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee-guaranteed home loan

If you have a home loan that is already participating under the RFHBG, you may be able to refinance your home loan with another Participating Lender and continue to have the benefit of the RFHBG.

Any such refinancing is subject to conditions, and you should contact your lender for further details if you are considering refinancing your existing RFHBG home loan with another Participating Lender.

It is not possible for your home loan to continue to have the benefit of the RFHBG if it is refinanced with another lender that is not a Participating Lender.

6.4 Privacy statement

Your personal information may be used by your lender, NHFIC and/or the Australian Government for the administration and operation of the RFHBG and assessing your eligibility under the RFHBG.

By requesting a Participating Lender to take any steps to have your home loan covered by the RFHBG or by completing and submitting a Home Buyer Declaration, you consent to your lender, NHFIC and/or the Australian Government collecting, using and disclosing your personal information for the abovementioned purposes and any other incidental or related purpose.

Your lender, NHFIC and/or the Australian Government may disclose your personal information to any party engaged in the assessment or evaluation of the RFHBG.

Your lender, NHFIC and/or the Australian Government will store personal information collected through your home loan application process (including information to assess your eligibility under the RFHBG), supporting documents, the loan agreement and any monitoring, research and evaluation activities in compliance with their respective obligations under the Privacy Act and any other privacy legislation applicable in their jurisdiction.

Your personal information will not be disclosed overseas. You may access or correct your personal information at any time by contacting your lender.

Further information about your lender's privacy policy and NHFIC's privacy policy, including rights of access and complaints handling, may be accessed at your lender's website or [nhfic.gov.au](https://www.nhfic.gov.au) (as applicable).

7. Checklists – Your Eligibility Checks

The following checklists are to assist you to work through Your Eligibility Checks. You should refer back to the relevant sections of this document for further information on each check.

7.1 Initial check – eligibility as a single or couple

No.	Question	RFHBG Guide section	Your answer	
Q.	Will you be applying under the RFHBG as a single or as part of a couple (i.e. you and your spouse or de facto partner are jointly applying under the RFHBG as a couple)?	2.1.2	☐ Single <i>You should complete the checks for singles at section 7.2</i>	☐ Couple <i>You should complete the checks for couples at section 7.3</i>

7.2 Checks for singles

The following checks are applicable for singles. If you answer ‘no’ to any of the questions, you will not be eligible to participate in the RFHBG.

No.	Question	RFHBG Guide section	Your answers	
Q1.	Have you lived in a regional area for the preceding 12 month period? [^]	2.1.1	☐ Yes	☐ No
Q2.	Is the property you intend to purchase located in the regional area you live in or an adjacent regional area?	2.1.1 & 2.1.5	☐ Yes	☐ No
Q3.	Do you have your Notice of Assessment for the 2021-22 income year (as issued by the Australian Taxation Office) (or did you earn less than the tax-free threshold)?	2.1.3	☐ Yes	☐ No
Q4.	Do you satisfy the income test (for singles) at your Home Loan Date?	2.1.3	☐ Yes	☐ No
Q5.	Will you satisfy the prior property ownership test at your Home Loan Date?	2.1.4	☐ Yes	☐ No
Q6.	Will you be an Australian citizen at your Home Loan Date?	2.1.5	☐ Yes	☐ No
Q7.	Will you be 18 years or over at your Home Loan Date?	2.1.6	☐ Yes	☐ No
Q8.	Do you have a deposit of at least 5% and less than 20% of the value of the property you would like to purchase?	2.1.7	☐ Yes	☐ No

[^] Australian Defence Force members may be eligible for a partial exemption and should check with their participating lender if this applies (see section 2.1.1)

No.	Question	RFHBG Guide section	Your answers
Q9.	Do you intend to reside in the property you purchase as an owner-occupier while your home loan is guaranteed under the RFHBG?	2.1.8	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q10.	Are you sure there are no matters in your personal circumstances that could mean you aren't eligible for the RFHBG?	2.1.9	☐ Yes ☐ No

7.3 Checks for couples

The following checks are applicable for couples.

If either of you answer 'no' to any of the questions, you will not be eligible to participate in the RFHBG.

No.	Question	RFHBG Guide section	Your answer	
			Applicant 1	Applicant 2
Q1.	Have either of you lived in a regional area for the preceding 12 month period? [^]	2.1.1	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q2.	Is the property you intend to purchase located in the regional area you live in or an adjacent regional area?	2.1.1 & 2.1.5	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q3.	Do you have your Notice of Assessment for the 2021-22 income year (as issued by the Australian Taxation Office) (or did you earn less than the tax-free threshold)?	2.1.3	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q4.	Do you (together) satisfy the income test (for couples) at your Home Loan Date?	2.1.3	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q5.	Will each of you satisfy the prior property ownership test at your Home Loan Date?	2.1.4	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q6.	Will you be an Australian citizen at your Home Loan Date?	2.1.5	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q7.	Will you be 18 years or over at your Home Loan Date?	2.1.6	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q8.	Do you (together) have a deposit of at least 5% and less than 20% of the value of the property you would like to purchase?	2.1.7	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q9.	Do you intend to reside in the property you purchase as an owner-occupier while your home loan is guaranteed under the RFHBG?	2.1.8	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q10.	Are you sure there are no matters in your personal circumstances (or your spouse or de facto partner's circumstances) that could mean you (or your spouse or de facto partner's circumstances) aren't eligible for the RFHBG?	2.1.9	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No

[^] Australian Defence Force members may be eligible for a partial exemption and should check with their participating lender if this applies (see section 2.1.1)

8. Glossary

Australian Defence Force Member	A member of the Australian Defence Force (other than as a member of the Reserves), as those terms are defined in the <i>Defence Act 1903</i> (Cth).
Eligible Loan	A home loan made by a Participating Lender that is eligible to participate under the RFHBG.
Eligible Property	A residential property that is eligible to participate under the RFHBG.
Home Buyer Declaration	The form of statutory declaration provided to you by your Participating Lender in relation to the RFHBG.
HGS	Home Guarantee Scheme.
Home Loan Date	The date when you sign your home loan agreement with your Participating Lender. <i>You will need to confirm what this date is with your Participating Lender, as it may differ between you and another first home buyer and may be different from other lenders and for particular purposes, depending upon their procedures for loan approvals and how they participate under the RFHBG.</i>
Income Tax Assessment Act	<i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1997</i> (Cth).
Major Bank Lenders	Participating Lenders who are listed as ‘Major bank lenders’ on nhfic.gov.au
NHFIC	National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation.
National Consumer Credit Protection Act	<i>National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009</i> (Cth).
Non-Major Lenders	Participating Lenders who are listed as ‘Non-major lenders’ on nhfic.gov.au
Participating Lender	Each eligible lender that has been approved by NHFIC, as listed on the Scheme webpage at nhfic.gov.au . These include the Major Bank Lenders and the Non-Major Lenders. A reference in this document to “your lender” is a reference to your Participating Lender.
Privacy Act	<i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth).
Real property	“Real property” means the land, everything permanently attached to it, and all of the interests, benefits, and rights inherent in the ownership of real estate.
Representative	For any Participating Lender, any third-party broker or other person that is authorised by the Participating Lender to suggest that Eligible Borrowers may apply for, or to assist Eligible Borrowers to apply for, Eligible Loans with the Participating Lender.
Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee	The Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee (RFHBG) is part of the Home Guarantee Scheme.
RFHBG Place Reservation	A reservation made by a Participating Lender for a guarantee to apply for your home loan under the RFHBG.
Scheme	The Australian Government’s Home Guarantee Scheme (HGS). <i>The Scheme is established by NHFIC (in accordance with the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation Act 2018 (Cth) and the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation Investment Mandate Direction 2018 (Cth)), as amended from time to time.</i>

Scheme Webpage	The Scheme Webpage for the Home Guarantee Scheme is at nhfic.gov.au <i>Information in relation to the Scheme that is included on or available through the Scheme Webpage is general information only and it does not form part of this document.</i>
Value	The 'Value' of the property you purchase as assessed by the Participating Lender for your home loan in accordance with the requirements of the RFHBG.

