



The Road Home

A Guide to the Application and Homebuilding Process

St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity puts all of the benefits of home ownership within your reach. We make coming home affordable by building and selling simple homes at no profit, financed with 0% or low interest loans. Instead of a large down payment, you volunteer your time and talent on the construction site, in the office and in the community. Habitat helps bring donations, materials and volunteers together to keep home prices low which includes escrows for your homeowner insurance and real estate taxes, and our energy efficient designs keep utility bills low as well.

Not all applicants are accepted, and a denial letter can be issued at any point in the process (below); but as your situations change, we welcome you to reapply as you are ready and able.

Application

- Pick up and complete a homeowner application form. Mail in your application to PO BOX 70, Hammond, WI 54015. An online application is also available for download at www.scvhabitat.org. Our office (715) 350-8575.

Family Selection Committee Review

- This committee meets monthly and will review your application. They check for our 4 criteria:
 - **Need:** Your current housing situation, and if it's unacceptable or unaffordable;
 - **Residency:** have you lived or worked in St. Croix/Pierce county for the last 6 months;
 - **Willingness to Partner:** can you commit to 250-500 Sweat Equity volunteer hours to the build, and demonstrate an ability to partner throughout the life of the project;
 - **Ability to Pay:** verify your employment history and other income. You will need to pay the monthly mortgage (zero or low % interest) and escrow (insurance and property taxes).
- This committee also verifies your application materials. We celebrate that people and situations can change for the better, and we weigh any struggles from your past against your current situation and progress when we analyze your:
 - Credit Report;
 - Criminal Background Check.

Interview

- Two members of the Family Selection Committee meet with you at your current residence, get to know you and go through a checklist of questions that help us clarify your application, assess your needs and determine your suitability for the program.
- Sometimes a second interview is scheduled to clarify details and follow up.
- Interview notes are discussed in the Family Selection Committee and a decision is made to accept the application and recommend acceptance to the board, or to deny and send a letter to you to that effect.

Board of Directors Vote

- The family selection committee will then recommend your application to the Board of Directors for approval, your application will be considered at the board's regular monthly meeting. We will notify you with the board's decision.

Mutual Understanding of Acceptance

- If your application is accepted by the committee *and* the board, we will ask you to come in and sign this document to certify your willingness and commitment to partner with us. There will also be an orientation for you to clarify your rights and responsibilities within the program.

Sweat Equity – “First 50”

- Your “First 50” hours of volunteering are required before you sign an official contract.
- Required classes in Budgeting, Home Maintenance and Worksite Safety can be completed during this time as Sweat Equity hours.

Homeowner Contract

- After your “First 50,” we will sign the contract and start the work on your house!
- We will help you set up a savings plan (escrow account) to cover closing costs so that you have those expenses budgeted for when the time comes.

Sweat Equity – Construction and Volunteering

- Work begins to complete your home and earn sweat equity. After your “First 50” you are required to complete:
 - 100 on-site, 250 total sweat equity hours for a single adult/family (with a cap of 120 ‘Friends and Family’ contributed Hours).
 - 200 on-site, 500 total sweat equity hours for two adult/family (with a cap of 200 ‘Friends and Family’ contributed hours).

Inspections, Appraisals, Certificate of Occupancy

- Throughout the building process, inspectors and appraisers will ensure compliance with all city, state, and federal codes.

Punchlist

- You walk through your home with our construction team and ensure that everything is complete and move-in ready. You will also learn how to take care of your new home. We won’t turn it over to you until you’re happy!

Final Credit Check

- Before the sale closes, we do a final verification of credit to make sure your financial situation has remained stable.

Dedication

- The Dedication Ceremony is a celebration of all the hard work you’ve done to build your home!

Closing

- At this meeting, we will sign your closing documents, including: transfer return, mortgage paperwork, promissory note, etc.
- \$2,000 in closing costs must be submitted before this time with monthly payments, and all your sweat equity hours must be completed and signed-off on.
- After closing, you take the keys and can move in, and monthly repayments begin!
- Your home is covered by a one year warranty.

Color Code: *Documents to Complete and Sign

*Meetings to Attend

*Sweat Equity Volunteer Hours to Work

*Work that Habitat Staff and Volunteers Do (*behind the scenes*)

