



Homeownership Grant Program

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1. Purpose

To assist in preserving homeownership for low-income households in areas where increasing property value outpaces income.

2. Applicability

The Homeownership Grant shall be available to real property owners in Buncombe County which meet the following criteria:

- 2.1 Real Property. The real property must: (1) be a single family residence; (2) have at least one homeowner residing at the real property; and (3) not, in whole or part, be rented on a short or long term basis.
- 2.2 Real Property Taxes. The Buncombe County real property taxes must have increased as a result of any increased Buncombe County tax bill following the most recent revaluation. An increase in value due to renovations or disqualification from a tax relief or deferral program will not be considered.
- 2.3 Owner(s): The owner(s) must: (1) identify income from all sources (including all financially responsible adults of the household and all property owners); (2) have income at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI) using the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) family size calculation for the Asheville Fair Market Rent (FMR) Area; (3) have resided at the real property as their principal residence for at least one (1) year; (4) currently identify the real property as their primary residence; (5) occupy the real property 12 months out of each year; (6) not receive any other assistance related to property tax; and (7) have all property tax bills in good standing.

3. Policy

- 3.1 Grant Funding. Grant funding is awarded: (1) on a first come, first served basis; (2) in an amount equal to the increase in taxes between the new reappraisal year tax amount and the previous year's tax amount, but at no time in excess of \$1,000 per year, for any year, per parcel; and (3) up and until such time as the budgeted funding to support the program is exhausted.
- 3.2 Grant Calculation. After each revaluation, a new baseline for the grant calculation will be set. The new baseline will be the difference between the previous tax bill amount, excluding any grant funds, and the new tax bill amount. Only an increase to Buncombe County taxes will be considered in the grant calculation.

- 3.3 **Application.** Applications for the Homeownership Grant must be submitted to Health and Human Service (HHS) by the owner(s) of the real property by Nov. 15th. Applicants must be re-certified each year. Applicants may be qualified based on participation in other HHS programs.
- 3.4 **Income Verification.** Applicants shall submit evidence of income for the prior year. The County shall not disclose income evidence pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. 153A-148.1. If the homeowner is already receiving HHS program services, the county will deem that homeowner as categorically eligible income-wise for this program.
- 3.5 **Disqualification.** The owner will be disqualified should the owner: (1) be found to have received the grant by fraudulent actions, (2) become delinquent in paying the portion of property tax not included in the grant in any year, or (3) not follow any payment arrangement for the portion of the tax not included in the Grant.
- 3.6 **Payment of the Grant.** The Grant award will be paid directly to the Tax Collector from HHS.
- 3.7 **Payment of the Taxes Not Covered by the Grant.** The owner may setup a reasonable payment arrangement, approved by the Tax Collector, for the portion of taxes not included in the Grant.
- 3.8 **Appeals.** If the homeowner is denied services through this program, they can appeal the decision to an impartial HHS staff member. The appeal needs to be made within 10 days of being notified of the denial. This appeal will need to be heard within 5 days and a decision rendered within 15 days of the hearing.

4. Definitions

- 4.1. **Single Family Residence:** Includes townhomes, duplexes, mobile homes, condominiums, and any structure that serves as a primary residence.
- 4.2. **Family Size:** All persons living on the property.
- 4.3. **Delinquent:** Any past due amount, not including the past due amount that is part of an approved, current payment plan.
- 4.4. **Fraud:** Deception or misrepresentation of facts intended to result in financial or personal gain.

5. Approval and Revision History

Policy Origination Date:	Click for Date
Approval Date:	Click for Date
Revision History Dates:	Enter Dates
Revision History Changes:	

6. Background

The 2021 Revaluation resulted in an average increase of 18% for all properties in Buncombe County. In order to alleviate the property tax increase impact to homeowners with limited or fixed incomes, the Buncombe County Commissioners established the Homeownership Grant Program.