

# Housing Counseling Services

MSHDA's [Housing Education Program](#) partners with 35 Housing Counseling Agencies throughout Michigan which employs counselors and educators who hold HUD and National Certifications to deliver counseling and educational classes in the following key areas:



## Homebuyer Education

Homebuyer Education is designed to help individuals think critically about the benefits and risks of homeownership, understand how to select affordable homes and appropriate mortgage products, and build the financial knowledge, resources, and behaviors needed for sustainable homeownership and long-term financial health.

Topics taught during this 4-6 hour class include:

- Assessing Readiness to Buy
- Affordability, Credit and Budgeting
- Mortgages & DPA Programs
- Loan Processing and Fees
- Partner Roles including Realtor, Title, Loan and Escrow Agents
- The Closing Process
- Fair Housing and Consumer Protection Laws

## Pre-Purchase individual Counseling

Pre-Purchase Counseling is individual housing counseling services performed by a Certified Housing Counselor. While the sessions are customized for the individual client, the main purpose is to assist clients in making decisions related to:

- Income verification and Calculation
- Review and Analyze Consumer Credit Report
- Analyze Household Budgets & Spending Habits
- Assess Mortgage Readiness & Affordability
- Create Debt Reduction and Spending/Saving Plans



## Foreclosure Individual Counseling

Housing Counselors assist homeowners who are facing a financial crisis through mortgage or tax foreclosure. Counselors address reasons of default; ways to maximize income and reduce expenses; advising owners on the key players in the mortgage marketplace; help owners navigate through loss-mitigation options; legal information about Michigan foreclosure laws and timelines; assist in effectively communicating with lenders and servicers; and offer information on homeowner and lender rights and obligations found in loan documents.

## **Financial Capabilities Group Education**

Today's consumer is seeking financial security — searching for real-time information on how to maneuver the maze of financial products and services, establish or rebuild credit, reduce debt and save for the future. Certified Housing Counselors equip clients in reaching their potential. This course addresses the fundamental components of consumer financial literacy. Nine core content modules are offered including:

- Mastering Money Management
- Developing Spending Plans
- Improving Credit & Savings
- Student Loan Debt
- Fair Housing & Fair Lending
- Banking Basics
- Debt Reduction
- Consumer Protection Laws
- Insurance



## **Rental Housing Education & Counseling**

Through group education, Housing Counselors offer training on Rental Education which equips current and future tenants to be successful. Course participants learn how to avoid discrimination and addressing tenant/landlord issues such as deposits, procedures for handling health and safety repairs, tenant remedies and eviction-related issues. Housing Counselors offer a customized rental counseling sessions which aids clients in addressing immediate rental crisis counseling as well as long term planning for successful and sustainable rental housing. Counselors will work with their clients to analyze finances, determine affordability, review credit reports.

## **Disaster Relief Housing Counseling**

When disaster strikes, whether natural or man-made, households and businesses alike find themselves facing monumental challenges and making life-changing choices which are daunting and confusing. That is why the first place to turn should be a HUD Housing Counseling Agency. Housing Counselors are in a unique position to help their communities prepare for and recover from a disaster. HUD counseling agencies deploy Housing Counselors who have been nationally trained in disaster relief and recovery services. When the immediate emergency services end, counselors step in to take over by helping clients to navigate the complexities of disaster recovery resources and programs.



## **Homeless Individual Counseling**

Housing Counselors offer Homeless Counseling to clients that have or are at risk of losing their housing. Counselors offer housing search assistance, short-term housing options, and holistic housing counseling services which focuses on stability. This includes the offering of budgeting assistance, affordability analysis, credit report review and mediation with landlords and neighbors if needed. Counseling sessions include staff completing an intake application, setting up a written spending plan, determining household goals, making referrals, and updates on goal progression.