

# RESOURCES TO HELP HOMEOWNERS AVOID FORECLOSURE

**Government and Nonprofit Resources:** A number of federal and state agencies and nonprofit organizations have developed foreclosure prevention programs to help homeowners who are having trouble with their home loans. The following organizations offer free or low-cost foreclosure prevention programs to eligible homeowners:

➤ **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**

HUD provides a variety of resources for homeowners at risk of foreclosure. The Department funds free housing counseling services throughout the country. HUD-approved counselors can help homeowners understand the law and their options, organize their finances, and represent borrowers in negotiations with their lenders if this assistance is needed.

- **Telephone:** 1-800-569-4287
- **HUD-Approved Housing Counseling Agencies in Massachusetts:**  
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/hcs.cfm?webListAction=search&searchstate=MA>
- **Additional HUD resources for avoiding foreclosure:**  
<http://www.hud.gov/foreclosure/index.cfm>

➤ **Massachusetts Attorneys General**

Homeowners who suspect that they have been a victim of fraud, misleading information, or other deceptive practices, should contact the Massachusetts Attorney General's office. This office investigates complaints and sues lenders and other mortgage originators for alleged illegal behavior.

- **Telephone:** 617-727-2200
- <http://www.ago.state.ma.us>

➤ **Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency**

State Housing Finance Agencies administer a wide range of affordable housing and community development programs. A number of state HFAs have partnered with other entities (including nonprofit counseling agencies, local governments, state housing departments and lenders) to provide comprehensive foreclosure prevention and mitigation strategies, such as MassHousing partnering with Neighborworks.

- **Contact MassHousing:** <http://www.masshousing.com>
- **Contact Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development:**  
<http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/>

➤ **NeighborWorks**

NeighborWorks was created by Congress to provide financial support, technical assistance, and training for community revitalization efforts. NeighborWorks provides a variety of resources for preserving homeownership in the face of rising foreclosure rates including *HOPE for Homeowners*, a toll-free national hotline that offers free foreclosure prevention and counseling advice from a third party, HUD-certified, not-for-profit network of counseling agencies dedicated to helping homeowners avoid foreclosure. In Massachusetts, NeighborWorks has teamed up with the MassHousing and Fannie Mae to provide this service. The hotline connects homeowners in the state with Massachusetts non-profits who provide in-depth counseling about how they can work with their lender to remain in their home despite falling behind on their mortgage payments.

- **HOPE for Homeownership Hotline** (in English and Spanish): 1-888-995-HOPE
- **Find a HUD-certified NeighborWorks organization:**  
<http://www.nw.org/network/nwdata/hudhousing.asp>
- **Information on the Center for Foreclosure Solutions:**  
<http://www.nw.org/network/neighborworksProgs/foreclosuresolutions/default.asp>

- **National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC)**  
 NCRC is a national coalition of more than 800 non-profit organizations that seek to increase the flow of private capital into underserved communities. NCRC's Consumer Rescue Fund works with victims of predatory lending to provide mediation, refinancing and renegotiation of mortgages. Refinancing services are currently available in the states of: Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas and Wisconsin.
  - **NCRC's Information and CRF Services line:** 202-628-8866
  - **Website for the CRF:** <http://www.fairlending.com/>
  
- **National Council of LaRaza (NCLR)**  
 NCLR is the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States. NCLR's Homeownership Network of 42 community-based organizations provides home ownership counseling and can intervene between borrowers facing financial crisis and the lenders and/or mortgage servicer.
  - **Contact NCLR:** 202-785-1670
  - **NCLR's Website:** [www.nclr.org](http://www.nclr.org)
  
- **Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America (NACA)**  
 NACA is a national non-profit advocacy and homeownership organization. NACA's Refinance Program offers new loans to eligible homeowners with unaffordable mortgages. NACA's *Home Save* program gives counseling and financial assistance to eligible homeowners who are at risk of foreclosure.
  - **NACA's Information and Refinancing Services line:** 1-888-302-NACA
  - **Website:** <https://www.naca.com/program/homesaveProgram.jsp>

**Government Sponsored Enterprise Resources:** *GSEs also provide excellent resources for Congressional offices seeking to aid constituents facing or at risk of foreclosure:*

- **Fannie Mae**  
 Fannie Mae's *HomeStay Initiative* provides flexible mortgage products that help homeowners with blemish credit histories refinance as well as counseling and foreclosure prevention services. In addition, Fannie Mae has worked with Massachusetts' state housing finance agency, as well as those of New York and Ohio, to develop refinancing programs to assist homeowners who are facing foreclosure or have a mortgage product that may no longer be suitable to their financial situation. Fannie has designed a product that allows eligible at-risk homeowners to refinance into 30-year fixed rate mortgage loan.
  - **Information on *HomeStay Initiative*:** <https://www.efanniemae.com/homestay>
  
- **Freddie Mac**  
 Freddie Mac helped to develop and fund *Don't Borrow Trouble*, a comprehensive consumer awareness and foreclosure prevention campaign. In addition, Freddie Mac has partnered with national non-profit organizations, counseling agencies and several lenders on a foreclosure-avoidance initiative designed to reach out to delinquent borrowers early on and provide appropriate counseling through trusted intermediaries to help avoid foreclosure.
  - **Information on *Don't Borrow Trouble*:** <http://www.dontborrowtrouble.com/>

**Legal Resources:** *In addition to the resources above, some Massachusetts homeowners may want to retain an attorney to help them navigate the legal system:*

➤ **National Association of Consumer Advocates**

The National Association of Consumer Advocates (NACA) is a nationwide organization of more than 1000 attorneys who represent and have represented hundreds of thousands of consumers victimized by fraudulent, abusive and predatory business practices. NACA attorneys have represented thousands of victims of predatory lending practices. The legal services are provided by legal service lawyers and private practice attorneys who provide free or low-cost legal representation.

- **Contact NACA:** 202-452-1989
- **Find an attorney in MA:** <http://members.naca.net/findanattorney.php>