



NEWS RELEASE

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Homeownership Program Index Highlights Programs for Community Heroes

Nearly 13 percent of programs offer special incentives for law enforcement, first responders, educators and military

Atlanta, GA, August 9, 2018 – Atlanta-based Down Payment Resource, the nationwide database for homebuyer programs, today released its Second Quarter 2018 Homeownership Program Index (HPI). The number of total programs increased to 2,527, up 24 programs from the previous quarter. Eighty-six (86) percent of programs currently have funds available for eligible homebuyers, down just a half a percent from the previous quarter.

Down Payment Resource (DPR) communicates with 1,304 program administrators to track and update the country's wide range of homeownership programs, including down payment and closing cost programs, Mortgage Credit Certificates, affordable first mortgages and more.

As home prices increase, especially among starter homes, more states, cities and municipalities are considering down payment assistance and incentive programs to help address homeownership affordability challenges for its community servants. This quarter, nearly 7 percent (6.8%) of programs are available for workers who provide some of the most important services to a community, including teachers, first responders, law enforcement, firefighters and healthcare workers. Plus, more than 6 percent (6.1%) of programs have benefits for veterans, members of the military and surviving spouses. These programs can also be layered with zero down payment VA loans.

"All markets value our first responders, military, educators and other community service roles. More cities -- especially higher cost markets -- are beginning to look for creative ways to recruit and retain these workers, including ways to make homeownership possible," said Rob Chrane, CEO of Down Payment Resource.

Special incentives for heroes

Homebuyer programs with special incentives for community servants have been available in markets across the country for decades. They may be separate programs, or they might offer an additional benefit or more flexible eligibility requirements for homebuyers in that profession. To qualify for a homeownership program, both the buyer and the property must meet certain criteria, which vary by program.

Municipalities may structure these programs to help encourage homeownership in a revitalization area, help community heroes to live close to where they work and help recruit and retain key service personnel.

Program examples:

- On August 6, 2018, the Golden State Finance Authority announced a new [Platinum “Select” Feature](#), an addition to its GSFA Platinum Program. It provides a down payment assistance grant, instead of a second mortgage, of up to 5% of the first mortgage loan amount to eligible law enforcement, first responders and educators in the state of California.
- In June 2018, the City of Mobile, Alabama launched the [Public Safety Down Payment Assistance Program](#) to help to help police officers and firefighters become first time homeowners. The program provides up to \$20,000 for down payment and closing costs and up to \$40,000 in certain target areas.
- In October 2017, Washington D.C.’s Department of Housing and Community Development EAH [First Responder program](#) was expanded to include a grant of up to \$10,000, plus a matching funds grant of up to \$15,000. This is in addition to the EAH deferred loan that they are eligible to receive as District employees.
- Available since 1998, the Mississippi Home Corporation [Housing Assistance for Teachers \(HAT\)](#) Program is available in 40 of the 82 counties in the state. It provides a forgivable loan of up to \$6,000 for teachers who agree to a 3 year teaching contract in an eligible county.
- Some programs offer an additional benefit to community heroes. For example, the Georgia Dream Program offers \$5,000 in down payment assistance to qualified buyers and an additional \$2,500 to eligible public protector, education, healthcare provider or active military. In Arizona, the Home In 5 Advantage Program provides 3% down payment for buyers and an additional 1% to teachers, first responders and veterans.
- HUD’s Good Neighbor Next Door program helps law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMTs and teachers get 50 percent off the list price of a HUD foreclosure home. Eligible homes can be found via [HUD’s look-up tool](#).

Numerous states and municipalities offer similar programs to our nation's core service providers, enabling them to live where they work. In addition, community heroes may benefit from special savings and rebates from [Homes for Heroes](#) when they buy, sell or refinance a home.

HPI Data About All Types of Programs

- 38% of homeownership programs do not have a first-time homebuyer requirement and are available for eligible repeat homebuyers. (First-time homebuyer is defined by HUD as someone who has not owned a home in three years.)
- 75% of programs are available in a specific local area, such as a city, county or neighborhood. 25% of programs are available statewide through state housing finance agencies.
- 19% of programs allow buyers to purchase a multi-family property as long as the buyer occupies one of the units.
- Nearly 7% (6.8%) of programs are available for community service workers, including educators, police officers, firefighters and healthcare workers.
- More than 6% (6.1%) of programs have benefits for veterans, members of the military and surviving spouses. These programs can also be layered with zero down payment VA loans.
- 69% of programs in the database are down payment or closing cost assistance. 9% of programs are first mortgages and 8% of programs are Mortgage Credit Certificates (MCCs).
- States with the greatest number of down payment programs remained consistent—California, Florida and Texas are the top three. View a complete list of [state-by-state program data](#).
- More than 50 percent of programs accept online homeownership education.

About Down Payment Resource

Down Payment Resource (DPR) creates opportunity for homebuyers, REALTORS® and lenders by uncovering programs that get people into homes. The company tracks more than 2,500 homebuyer programs through its housing finance agency partners. DPR has been recognized by Inman News as “Most Innovative New Technology” and the HousingWire Tech100™. DPR is licensed to Multiple Listing Services, Realtor Associations, lenders and housing counselors across the country. For more information, please visit DownPaymentResource.com and on Twitter at [@DwnPmtResource](https://twitter.com/DwnPmtResource).

About Down Payment Resource's Homeownership Program Index

The Homeownership Program Index (HPI) measures the availability and characteristics of down payment programs administered by state and local Housing Finance Agencies (HFAs), nonprofits and other housing organizations. It analyzed state, local and national programs available in the DOWN PAYMENT RESOURCE® registry as of July 3, 2018.

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