

BC HOME Partnership FAQ

The BC Home Owner Mortgage and Equity Partnership (BC HOME Partnership) Program is now closed. The information provided here is for households who have an existing loan from the BC HOME Partnership Program.

1. What is the BC Home Owner Mortgage and Equity Partnership program?

The program assisted residents of British Columbia who were eligible first-time home buyers by providing repayable down payment assistance loans up to a maximum of five per cent of the purchase price.

The loan is for a 25-year term, interest and payment free for the first five years, and is registered on the title to the property as a second mortgage.

For the first five years of the loan, the home must be maintained as the owner's principal residence.

The program stopped accepting applications on March 31, 2018 and stopped providing loans as of September 28, 2018.

2. What is the definition of a principal residence?

Principal residence is defined as the home that is designated (and is eligible to be designated) as the owner's principal residence for tax purposes, and where all persons registered on title live permanently (for at least six months per year) in a self-contained unit with access to all living facilities at all times to conduct their daily activities (such as cooking, sleeping and receiving mail) and is the residential address used by the persons registered on title on documentation including but not limited to identification, vehicle registration and income tax returns.

3. How do you know if the residence is being maintained as a principal residence?

Every year the program will send you an Annual Mortgage Statement and a Principal Residence Declaration. For each individual on the title of the property, the declaration must be signed and sent back to BC Housing along with supporting documentation.

Random audits of the residence may be conducted.

4. What is the repayment process?

If you wish to start optional early repayment, please complete and submit the Pre-Authorized Debit Agreement form. The form must be received prior to the 15th of the month to be effective the following month.

At the beginning of the sixth year, interest will start accruing and the homeowner will begin making principal and interest payments, amortized over the remaining 20 years.

The BC HOME Partnership loan is due and payable in full upon any of the following:

- Default on the first mortgage or the BC HOME Partnership loan
- Transfer of the home or change of ownership
- The home is no longer the purchaser's principal residence in the first five years

5. What happens if the home is no longer the homeowner's principal residence in the first five years?

The BC HOME Partnership loan is due and payable in full.

6. What happens if the homeowner sells the property?

Upon sale, the loan must be repaid.

7. Can an owner be removed from title, such as in the event of divorce?

Yes, provided the original loan insurance policy remains on the first mortgage.

8. Can another owner be added to title in the future?

Additional owners may be permitted with prior consent, provided the original loan insurance policy remains on the first mortgage and all owners meet the program eligibility requirements in the first five years.

9. Can a first mortgage be refinanced?

Refinancing of the first mortgage is not permitted unless the BC HOME Partnership loan is paid in full.

In exceptional circumstances, BC Housing may not require payment in full as long as the original mortgage insurance remains in place. Such steps must be approved by BC Housing in advance of refinancing taking place.

BC Housing may grant priority to a new lender for the transfer of the first mortgage, if there is no equity take out and no changes to the mortgage terms and conditions (transfer of mortgage will be for less than the original mortgage).

If a homebuyer wants to renew with a different lender, BC Housing will agree to grant priority to the lender under the condition that the original mortgage insurance remains in effect.