

## FAMILY FOUNDATIONS OFFERS TIMES ON FORECLOSURE PROCESS



Getting into the house of your dreams is just the first step. The long-term objective is staying there. However, if making the mortgage payment is a struggle month after month, if it is going to present a hardship to the family, then other options should be considered.

A home is usually a person's largest investment, thus it is one that should be protected, but not at all costs. A recent NFCC-MSN Money Financial Literacy Survey revealed that one in every 10 Americans with a mortgage, or roughly 10 million adults, report being late or missing a mortgage payment in the last year. For this reason, today's consumer often takes drastic steps to satisfy the mortgage payment. Some are resorting to payday loans, while others are dipping into their retirement plans at work.

Obviously, a payday loan should not be a long-term solution to a monthly shortfall. Paying triple-digit annualized interest is never good. Likewise, individuals continually tapping into their retirement plans could end up with no house and no money for retirement.

Average consumers do not know the difference between a short sale, a deed in lieu, a forbearance or a loan modification, nor should they. That's where professional help becomes essential. There is help available, the help is free, and the answer may lie at the other end of the phone.

Why does the consumer not reach out for assistance? Statistics show that over half of those whose homes are foreclosed on never speak with their lender/servicer prior to foreclosure. They are avoiding the one person who can help. The reasons are varied, but among them are:

- They do not believe that any real help is available;
- They do not understand the terms, thus do not feel they can even begin a conversation on the topic; and
- They simply cannot face it.

The struggling homeowner does not have to go through the process alone. With more than 1,500 certified housing counselors, the NFCC Member network has the largest number of housing counselors in the nation, and is the largest provider of HUD housing-related services. Housing counseling is available in-person or by phone at close to 900 locations from coast-to-coast. Family Foundations counselors stand ready to help homeowners evaluate their options.

The message cannot be stated loudly enough: You do not have to go through this alone. Call for help, the sooner the better. Let a trained professional review your situation and find the resolution option best-suited to your individual circumstances. Will the home always be saved? No. Is there life after foreclosure? Certainly if you ever needed a friend in the

business, now is the time.

If you're curious about your risk of foreclosure, go to [www.HousingHelpNow.org](http://www.HousingHelpNow.org) and take the Mortgage Reality Check. This is a simple test where you answer a dozen questions and are then slotted into the appropriate risk category for foreclosure. If necessary, you can call a toll-free number (866) 845-2227 to be connected with the housing counselor closest to you. Eighty percent of those who have taken the quiz to date have fallen into the red danger zone indicating they are in imminent risk of foreclosure. You owe it to yourself and to your family to evaluate your risk. Take the quiz today.

**Family Foundations** stands ready to help. To reach us, call (904) 396-4846 or go online to [www.familyfoundations.org](http://www.familyfoundations.org).

### **About Family Foundations**

You don't have to solve your financial problems alone. Family Foundations has trained and certified credit counselors who offer financial management and debt reduction services. Family Foundations is a nonprofit, community-based organization and a Member of the National Foundations for Credit Counseling (NFCC). For more information on Family Foundations, call (904) 396-4846 or visit [www.familyfoundations.org](http://www.familyfoundations.org).