



1288 N. Tamiami Trail | N. Ft. Myers, FL 33903 | 239 652.0434

HABITAT for HUMANITY FACTS

Our Mission

To follow God's lead and partner with the community to provide decent, affordable homes for people in need so they may build better lives for their families.

What it is:

- ▶ Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry. Habitat houses are sold to partner families at no profit and zero interest, making homeownership affordable. Habitat for Humanity of Lee and Hendry Counties currently services approximately 500 Habitat mortgages.
- ▶ Affordable homeownership is important for many reasons. It stabilizes families, improves children's health and academic performance, and frees up income for other needs, giving families the first rung up the economic ladder.
- ▶ There are more than 1,500 Habitat affiliates in the United States and 550 international affiliates. Lee and Hendry Counties' affiliate is one of the largest in the nation.
- ▶ Every Habitat affiliate tithes 10% of its revenues to Habitat International to build homes in countries outside the United States. To date, the tithe from Lee and Hendry Counties has built more than 700 homes worldwide.

Homes:

- ▶ From 1979 to 2011, Habitat for Humanity of Lee and Hendry Counties has served 1,180 families, housing more than 3,000 individuals.
- ▶ Habitat homes are typically 3 & 4 bedrooms with two bathrooms and a one car garage.
- ▶ With the current over supply of homes in the local market, it is generally more cost effective to rehabilitate existing housing stock than to build new. Rehabbing foreclosed homes also helps to stabilize neighborhoods. In fiscal year 2010/11, Habitat provided homes for 70 families, all of which were rehabilitated.

Application Process:

- ▶ Low-income families in need of decent shelter apply to local Habitat affiliates. The volunteer family selection committee chooses homeowners based on their level of need, their willingness to become partners in the program and their ability to repay the no-profit mortgage.
- ▶ Homeowner candidates invest 250 'sweat equity' hours in building/volunteering with Habitat, attend homeownership classes and put \$1,200 toward closing costs. Homes are sold for appraised price, and monthly mortgage payments (including taxes and insurance) are set below 30% of the homeowner's income.

Funding:

- ▶ Habitat's funding comes from homeowners' mortgage payments, from government affordable housing assistance programs, and from contributions from individuals, companies, organizations and houses of worship.

Volunteering:

- ▶ Volunteers must be at least 14 years old and can sign up online. Volunteering builds fellowship and promotes teamwork within the group. Building or rehabbing homes is not the only way for people to get involved with Habitat's mission. Office work, help with Habitat's ReStore, and event support are some other ways for volunteers to help.

ReStore:

- ▶ Habitat's 29,000 square-foot ReStore is open to the public and offers construction materials, furniture, clothing, electronics, appliances, household goods and accessories. The store is operated by paid staff and volunteers and is located just across the street from Habitat's main office in North Fort Myers.
- ▶ ReStore profits go back into Habitat's affordable housing mission. The store has free pick-up service for large items, which can be arranged by calling 652-0388.

Senior Housing and Other Rentals:

- ▶ In 2006, Habitat for Humanity of Lee and Hendry Counties was the first affiliate in the nation to open a rental complex for low-income seniors. The complex includes 60 one bedroom efficiencies and currently charges residents \$425/month.
- ▶ Habitat also manages other small units on its campus that are used for volunteer housing when needed, and rented when not used for volunteers.