



# Your guide to the

# Financial Assistance Scheme

## What is this housing initiative?

The Vision 2010 Housing Strategy promotes the creation of a sustainable housing market with opportunities for everyone to “own a piece of the rock”. To realize this goal, the Government will support a range of housing initiatives. One such initiative is the Housing Incentives Programme which seeks to increase private sector involvement in housing.

Financial Assistance Scheme is one component of the Housing Incentives Programme. The Financial Assistance Scheme is designed to promote the spread of homeownership on Montserrat. It involves the provision of a conditional grant to assist qualified households in acquiring or constructing a decent permanent home North of Nantes River.

It will target persons, who based on their financial assessment, can acquire mortgage financing or utilized private resources to purchase or construct a home in the North of the Island. Households who require some collateral or financial assistance to procure land and construct a dwelling house in a timely manner to meet the housing needs of their families will benefit from this programme.

## What type of assistance is available?

Beneficiaries will receive a **standard conditional grant of EC\$40,000\***. This grant will be made payable to the Financial Institution providing the mortgage.

## How do I qualify?

To receive this grant, the head of the household must be able to secure sufficient funds to build a habitable dwelling within a maximum period of six to eight (6 – 8) months.

The conditional grant of EC\$40,000 along with the accumulated savings of the beneficiary should meet at least 25% of the cost of building a habitable home, within the specified time.

## Who is most likely to benefit?

Priority will be given to those applicants who are:

- First-time recipients of housing assistance from Government
- Paying mortgages or land loan payments for abandoned properties in the Exclusion Zone and/or the potential Evacuation Zone
- Living in rented private housing in the North
- Not owners of a dwelling house North of Nantes River
- Living in overcrowded or substandard housing
- Registered owners of land North of Nantes River, save and except where the applicant can acquire land and mortgage financing at the same time
- Skilled/professional workers within the public/private sector
- In fulltime stable employment
- Capable of securing a mortgage
- Employees within the essential services sector

\* Grants are subject to availability

## **How can I apply?**

To be eligible for assistance, applicants are expected to complete the Application Form for Housing Assistance and submit the following supporting documents:

1. Written proof from a credible financial institution that mortgage financing can be secured
2. Photo Identification (copy of passport or social security card)
3. Proof of land ownership in the North – copy of Land Certificate
4. Detailed Floor Plan/ Design Drawings
5. Planning permission for home construction

All applications must be completed in full, failure to do so will result in the application being rejected.

## **What are the terms and conditions?**

1. The Government will provide each beneficiary EC\$40,000 to assist households to obtain mortgage financing from a reputable financial institution.
2. The sums provided will be payable to the financial institution.
3. The assistance provided under the Financial Assistance Scheme is an Investment by Government to assist households in purchasing/building a home. As such when the property is sold or transferred outside of the grant condition period, the sums invested must be repaid.
4. Applications completed in full with all the required supporting documents will be assessed by the Financial Assistance Committee. The decision of the Committee is final and not subject to appeal
5. Failure to adhere to the terms and conditions of Government and that of the Financial Institution will result in the Beneficiary repaying the sums invested in full with interest as calculated by the Government or its agents.
6. Upon completion of the dwelling house, the Beneficiary must occupy the property for at least five (5) years and must not dispose of (put up for sale or transfer) the dwelling without prior notification of the Government or its agents.
7. If the Beneficiary disposes of the property without prior notification of Government, then he or she will be required to repay the sum invested in full plus interest as calculated by the Government or its agents.
8. Following the five (5) year grant condition period Beneficiaries are required to advise the Government if the property is to be sold or transferred to enable the Government to make arrangements to recover the amount invested.
9. The amount paid as a grant is an investment as such when the property is sold the funds invested by Government must be repaid.
10. The Beneficiary cannot terminate the agreement within the first year. After this period the agreement can be terminated with three (3) months' notice.

## **Where can I go for more information?**

For further information please contact the Housing Unit at the telephone number (644) 491-7862, 496-7865 or via electronic mail at [housingunit@gov.ms](mailto:housingunit@gov.ms)