REALTY EZ

2026-27 EDITION

HOMEOWNER HELP GUIDE

BEHIND ON PAYMENTS?

Know your options, protect your credit and avoid scams. A plain-English guide to foreclosure in Florida.

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YOU HAVE OPTIONS

THE SOONER YOU ACT, THE MORE CHOICES YOU KEEP.

Falling behind on a mortgage is stressful, but it doesn't have to end in foreclosure. Most homeowners have more options than they realize — especially early.

This guide explains how foreclosure works in Florida, the alternatives available and where to find free, trustworthy help. It is general information, not legal advice; speaking with a Florida attorney and a HUD-approved housing counselor is strongly recommended.

> **FREE HELP**
> HUD-approved housing counselors offer free or low-cost guidance. Find one at 1-800-569-4287 or hud.gov.

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THE PROCESS

01 HOW FORECLOSURE WORKS IN FLORIDA

Florida is a **judicial foreclosure** state: the lender must file a lawsuit and obtain a court judgment before the property can be sold. Timelines vary widely by case and court.

01 **Missed payments**
Late notices and calls from your servicer. Federal rules generally restrict starting foreclosure until a loan is more than 120 days delinquent.

02 **Breach / demand letter**
The lender notifies you of default and how to cure it.

03 **Lawsuit filed**
You're served with a summons and complaint. Respond within the deadline — usually 20 days.

04 **Judgment**
If the lender wins, the court enters a final judgment and sets a sale date.

05 **Foreclosure sale**
The property is sold at auction, typically online through the county clerk.

> **NEVER IGNORE COURT PAPERS**
> Failing to respond can lead to a default judgment. Contact an attorney immediately if you're served.

ALTERNATIVES

YOUR OPTIONS

02

OPTION	HOW IT WORKS	BEST FOR
Reinstatement	Pay all past-due amounts to bring the loan current	Temporary setback, funds available
Repayment plan	Spread past-due amounts over future payments	Income recovered
Forbearance	Temporarily reduce or pause payments	Short-term hardship
Loan modification	Permanently change rate, term or balance	Lower but stable income
Sell the home	Sell at market value and pay off the loan	Equity in the home
Short sale	Lender agrees to accept less than owed	Owing more than value
Deed in lieu	Voluntarily transfer the home to the lender	No equity, lender agrees

DEFICIENCY RISK

In Florida, a lender may pursue a deficiency judgment for the remaining balance after a foreclosure or short sale unless it is waived. Ask for a written waiver and get legal advice.

PROTECT YOUR EQUITY

SELLING BEFORE FORECLOSURE

03

If you have equity, selling on the open market may let you keep it — instead of losing it at auction.

- Get a free market analysis to see what your home is worth
- Request a written payoff statement from your servicer
- Compare a traditional sale with a fast cash sale
- Coordinate the closing date with any scheduled sale date — your attorney may be able to request more time

	MARKET SALE	FAST CASH SALE	FORECLOSURE AUCTION
Price	Full market value	Below market, as-is	Often well below value
Timeline	Typically 30–90+ days	Often 1–3 weeks	Set by the court
Your equity	You keep it after payoff	You keep what remains	Surplus only by claim, if any
Credit impact	No foreclosure on record	No foreclosure on record	Foreclosure on record

FREE HOME VALUE REVIEW

Find out what your home could sell for and what you could walk away with — confidentially.

PROTECT YOURSELF

AVOID FORECLOSURE SCAMS 04

RED FLAGS

- [ ] Anyone asking for upfront fees to 'save' your home
- [ ] Pressure to sign your deed over to a third party
- [ ] Instructions to stop talking to your lender
- [ ] Guarantees to stop foreclosure
- [ ] Requests to make payments to someone other than your servicer

Florida law regulates foreclosure-related rescue transactions. If something feels wrong, stop and call an attorney or a HUD-approved counselor.

Documents to gather

- [ ] Mortgage statements and loan number
- [ ] Hardship letter explaining what happened
- [ ] Recent pay stubs, tax returns and bank statements
- [ ] Any letters or court papers received

Notes

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CONFIDENTIAL HELP.
NO JUDGMENT.

Call for a private conversation about your home's value and your selling options.

CALL / TEXT	(239) 323-4167
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