

April 21, 2020

# Wells Fargo Home Lending

## COVID-19 FAQ for Housing Counselors

1. **What's the difference between a forbearance and a payment suspension?**

A forbearance agreement involves a suspension or reduction of payments. Because many people don't understand what a forbearance is, we have been talking about a payment suspension because it more clearly describes what's being offered.

2. **What assistance is available to homeowners struggling to pay their Wells Fargo Mortgage due to COVID-19 impacts?**

If customers are experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 and are unable to make their regular mortgage or home equity payments, we can help. They can request an immediate payment suspension — a temporary pause of their loan payments for an initial three months. It's best to request payment suspension only when they really need it because they may need to repay any missed payments at the end of the short-term relief period.

During payment suspension:

- We won't charge late fees or report additional missed payments to the credit bureaus.
- If the account is past due, we won't refer the account to foreclosure at this time.

3. **Does a homeowner have to prove that they have been impacted by COVID-19?**

Wells Fargo is immediately approving a 3-month payment suspension for all customers who request it due to a COVID-19 related hardship. The CARES Act specifically states that a customer qualifies if they have a Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, Federal Housing Administration (FHA), Veterans Affairs (VA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) loan. We're also offering 3-month payment suspensions for Wells Fargo-owned loans. We are not requiring documentation of the customer's hardship at this time.

4. **If a customer is delinquent and became active in foreclosure prior to COVID-19, do they still qualify for a payment suspension?**

Yes, as we are granting an immediate three-month payment suspension for any Wells Fargo Home Lending mortgage or home equity customer who requests assistance. They may have fewer repayment options when it comes to the end of their payment suspension period. We can explain the differences to them and discuss what repayment options are best for their situation.

5. **Are all types of Wells Fargo mortgages eligible for assistance? (Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, FHA, private portfolio, etc.)**

Yes.

6. **How should a Wells Fargo mortgage customer contact Wells Fargo to receive assistance?**

**Request Mortgage payment suspension:**

- If customers have Wells Fargo online banking, they can log in to their account. They would select the payment assistance alert located by their mortgage account information. Here is a quick video tutorial to help them complete the request.
- If they do not have online banking, they can sign-up or contact us at **1-800-219-9739**.

**Note:** we're experiencing high call volumes. We apologize for any long wait times.

**Request Home Equity payment suspension**

- Request a short-term payment suspension by emailing us through the secure Message Center in online banking. We'll respond to them in writing via U.S. mail within 7-10 days.
- If they don't have Wells Fargo online banking, they can sign-up or contact us at **1-800-219-9739**.

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While a customer is protected under the payment suspension, their Wells Fargo Home Equity account will be restricted from further advances and they will not have access to funds from this account. When the payment suspension ends and when they've resumed regular payments, we ask they contact us to request a reinstatement of the account. Additional information will be provided in writing.

7. **Are there special provisions for members of the military, first responders, health care & emergency workers needing mortgage assistance due to COVID-19?**

Wells Fargo is honored to serve those who serve our country. The immediate three-month payment suspension is for any Wells Fargo Home Lending mortgage or home equity customer who requests assistance.

In addition, the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) may offer protection or relief to members of the military, including the Reserves and National Guard, the Public Health Services, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and their spouses, partners and dependents. If a customer has recently been called to military service in support of state or federal efforts during the COVID-19 response, or is the spouse, partner in civil union, domestic partner, or dependent of a person who has been called to military service, and they have not made Wells Fargo aware of their status, they can send us their military service documentation in one of the following ways:

Mail/Overnight Mail:

Wells Fargo Bank

c/o SCRA Request

DSR – MAC D1118-02M

1525 W. WT Harris Blvd.

Charlotte NC, 28252-8522

Fax: 1-855-872-6262

For secure email options, they can call us at 1-855-USA-2WFB (1-855-872-2932) or visit any Wells Fargo Branch.

8. **What support are you offering to widows/widowers of the recently deceased due to COVID-19?**

Our sympathy is with anyone who has lost a family member. If our customer has died, we encourage you or an authorized representative to contact: 1-877-822-7864. We have a dedicated Life Events Team that can assist during this difficult time.

9. **What should a Wells Fargo mortgage customer expect at the end of the 90 day payment suspension?**

If customers need more time at the end of their initial three-month payment suspension period, depending on the type of loan they have, may have the option to extend the payment suspension up to an additional three months, for a total of six months. If they choose to extend their payment suspension period, they will still need to repay all missed payments. When it comes time for them to repay, we'll review their financial situation and discuss options. These options differ depending on their situation, such as the type of loan they have or whether they are in an active bankruptcy, and may include:

- An additional payment suspension – They may be able to continue the six-month payment suspension for up to an additional six months.
- A lump sum payment – If possible, they can repay the entire amount due at once.
- A repayment plan – We'll divide the amount due from the missed payments into manageable amounts, spread out over time.
- Payment deferral – We'll move the amount of the suspended payments to the end of their loan term.
- A loan modification – We may be able to change certain terms of their loan — such as the interest rate or the time allowed for repayment — to make payments more manageable. Their modified payment amount is based on their current financial situation and takes any hardship into account.

10. **Is Wells Fargo currently offering loan modifications?**

Yes, Wells Fargo continues to offer loan modifications and other payment assistance options. Customers can call us at 1-800-678-7986.

11. **Will the Wells Fargo mortgage customer's property taxes and insurance still be paid while the payment suspension is in place? Once the payment extension has completed, how does the customer make up those missed payments?**

We'll continue to make the customer's tax and insurance payments during the payment suspension period if they have an escrow account. However, the suspension of payments may result in a shortage in their escrow because it isn't receiving ongoing funds. We will work with our customers at the end of the suspension period to resolve any potential shortage.

12. **Will this payment suspension plan change their Home Affordable Modification Plan (HAMP)?**

If the mortgage was modified under the Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP) or Second Lien Modification Program (2MP) and a customer doesn't make a payment during this time, they could lose the pay-for-performance incentives. This is because they must remain in good standing with HAMP and 2MP.

13. **Does the customer qualify if they are in bankruptcy?**

Yes, they are eligible for payment suspension. We recommend they speak with their bankruptcy attorney about post-payment suspension options.

14. **Will a customer still receive their billing statements?**

Yes, we are legally required to send billing statements showing the amount due every 30 days. While the statement will still show the amount due, it will also reference the short-term payment suspension under the section labeled "Important Messages."

15. **What if the situation changes, and the customer has the ability to make partial or full mortgage payments?**

They can contact Wells Fargo and resume their payments. With the short-term payment suspension, they still owe the payments that were missed, however fewer missed payments means less that they will owe.

16. **Is Wells Fargo still refinancing mortgages during COVID-19?**

Yes, we are. However, because of the conditions created by COVID-19, we've placed some temporary restrictions on the refinance loans we can handle:

- Cash-out Refinance where you convert some of the equity in your home to cash, is not available at this time because we are not performing interior appraisals.
- Jumbo Loans which have loan amounts exceeding the current conforming loan limits, which vary based on the locale, are only available to current Wells Fargo customers who have carried a specific asset balances with us. The customer can speak to their local home mortgage consultant or call 1-877-937-9357 to learn if they may qualify.

Other refinance loans are available with few restrictions. If the customer has questions about their specific circumstances and whether they are able to refinance their loan, they can contact their local home mortgage consultant or call us at 1-877-937-9357.

**17. How will the payment suspension impact the customer's ability to refinance or get new credit?**

If applying to Wells Fargo to refinance their current mortgage loan or obtain a new mortgage loan or home equity, the short-term payment suspension plan must be resolved prior to the closing of the new financing. Note, however, that Wells Fargo won't report any missed or late payments, during the payment suspension period, to the credit bureaus.

**18. I heard Wells Fargo is not following my Governor's (Mayor's) request on waiving mortgage payments? Why not?**

If customers are experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 and are unable to make their regular mortgage or home equity payments, we can help. They can request an immediate payment suspension — a temporary pause of their loan payments for an initial three months. It's best to request payment suspension only when they really need it because they may need to repay any missed payments at the end of the short-term relief period.

During payment suspension:

- We won't charge late fees or report additional missed payments to the credit bureaus.
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**19. If a customer is on a loan modification trial plan due to another hardship but now is also impacted by COVID-19, do they still qualify for help?**

Yes. However, if they select to use this short-term payment suspension, we must cancel their other loan modification. They should contact us to discuss the best option for their situation.

20. **If a customer just purchased/refinanced their home and their next payment is due May 1 if they need a payment suspension will that start May 1<sup>st</sup> and 90 days after that?** The timing of the payment suspension is tied to the date the customer requests assistance. Suspension would be for the next three payments from the date of the customer's request.
21. **Will Wells Fargo continue to call customers during my 90 day payment suspension?** While the customer is in an approved suspension plan, we will follow-up periodically with them prior to the end of the payment suspension.
22. **If a customer did not call in requesting a payment suspension and Wells Fargo was not able to contact them but they are now 30+ days delinquent, will Wells Fargo still submit this negative data to the credit reporting agencies?**  
If a customer has not indicated a request for assistance, standard credit reporting guidelines still apply. As such, Wells Fargo will report the customer's loan status to the consumer reporting agencies, and is required to report accurately and completely.
23. **If a customer did not request a payment suspension until May or after, can the payment suspension be retroactive?** Payment suspensions are not retroactive. We can apply it immediately once they request it, but any reporting to the credit agencies will remain as stated prior to their request for payment suspension.
24. **Where should customers report if they encounter a potential scam where organizations are claiming they can help struggling borrowers with their payment suspension request for a fee?** All complaints should be routed to the [Federal Trade Commission](#).
25. **If a customer paid their April 1 payment and now realizes they need a payment suspension, can Wells Fargo refund the April 1 payment and place them on the 90 day payment suspension?**  
We can refund payments that will not cause a customer's account to become past due (due for a previous calendar month).  
**Example:** Refunding April's payment in April, however we could not refund March's payment if the request is made in April.
- Customers will need to call us at 1-800-219-9739 or send us a secure message in online banking.
26. **Is Wells Fargo temporarily disabling automatic payments during the payment suspension?**  
The customer will need to stop the automatic payments they are making from bill pay on Wells Fargo Online® or with any other financial institution. If they have a plan with us to automatically withdraw their mortgage or home equity payments directly from their checking or savings account, they will need to cancel it right away or if they choose to wait, we will cancel their drafting in approximately 2 business days. They will need to set up any automatic payments or plans again once the payment suspension period ends.
27. **What options are available for borrowers with investment properties if their tenants aren't making rent payments due to COVID-19 issues?**  
Wells Fargo Home Lending customers with a loan secured by a 1-4 family investment property are eligible for the same payment suspension option available to customers who occupy their homes. Options available after payment suspension options may vary by loan type and investor.

**For customers who are already working with a housing counselor AND for housing counseling agencies assisting Wells Fargo customers:**

28. **The housing counseling agency has a potential homebuyer who is having a hard time closing their loan. Whom should they contact?**

If the counseling agency is authorized to communicate on behalf of a Wells Fargo customer, they can call 1-877-937-9357, or contact the assigned home mortgage consultant.

**29. If a housing counselor wants to request assistance for their client that is not in a payment suspension, whom do they contact?**

If the counseling agency is authorized to communicate on behalf of a Wells Fargo customer, they can call 1-800-219-9739.

**Note:** we're experiencing high call volumes. We apologize for any long wait times.

**30. Does Well Fargo have webinars or training available for housing counselors on the payment suspension process?**

As we continue to evaluate how to best collaborate with partners and stakeholders, we encourage our partners to visit [www.wellsfargo.com/mortgageassist](http://www.wellsfargo.com/mortgageassist) for the most up-to-date information.