

Dear Homeowner:

Since becoming New York's Attorney General in 2011, I have made it a top priority of my administration to hold accountable those whose misconduct led to the collapse of the housing market--and to provide significant relief to homeowners who are struggling to get by.



Despite an improving economy, thousands of New Yorkers are behind on their mortgage payments or at risk of losing a home due to foreclosure. I'm aware how difficult and stressful this difficult situation may be. But there's help—and it's free.

The Attorney General's Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP) can help you save your home. Through a network of state funded housing counselors and legal services providers, homeowners have advocates available to them to help understand their finances, connect them to free legal services, and even speak to the bank on their behalf.

To be connected with a mortgage and foreclosure specialist, please contact the Attorney General's foreclosure prevention hotline at **855-HOME-456**. You can also visit our website at www.AGHomeHelp.com.

I want to do everything I can to help homeowners keep their homes and to keep our state strong. I hope you will take advantage of these services by calling **855-HOME-456** today.

Sincerely,

Eric T. Schneiderman



New York State Attorney General
The State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224
1-800-771-7755
www.ag.ny.gov

Resources

New York State Attorney General's Office
Homeowner Protection Program
www.AGHomeHelp.com
855-HOME456

For more consumer protection information from the Attorney General
www.ag.ny.gov
800-771-7755

Making Home Affordable
For information on federal Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP) and the Home Affordable Refinance Program (HARP)
www.MakingHomeAffordable.gov
888-995-HOPE (4673)

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
www.HUD.gov
800-569-4287



NEW YORK STATE OFFICE
of the
ATTORNEY GENERAL



**Help for
Avoiding
Foreclosure**

Eric T. Schneiderman

Free Help Available to New York Homeowners

Homeowner Protection Program

The mortgage crisis has had a devastating impact not only on families whose homes are subject to foreclosure, but also on surrounding communities across New York State. In New York State alone, more than 140,000 mortgages are seriously delinquent, defined as in foreclosure or more than 90 days in arrears. That's an average of 1 in 10 mortgages.

In June 2012, Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced the launch of the Homeowner Protection Program, his office's commitment of \$60 million over three years to fund housing counseling and legal services for struggling New York homeowners. The funds awarded represent a portion of the millions of dollars that New York received as a result of the National Mortgage Settlement between the five largest mortgage servicing banks, 49 states, and the federal government over foreclosure abuses.

There is Help

During the first year of the program, over 5,000 homeowners from across the state contacted the AG's foreclosure prevention hotline. Those callers were connected to one

of the nearly 100 legal services organizations and housing counseling agencies that provide free foreclosure prevention services.

You can access the Homeowner Protection Program by calling the AG's foreclosure prevention hotline at 855-HOME-456 to talk to a foreclosure prevention specialist or by going to our website: www.AGHomeHelp.com. On the website, you will find links, by county, to:

- **Legal Services**

Homeowners facing foreclosure will find organizations to provide legal advice, advocacy and litigation services. It's always a good idea to call in advance to see if an appointment is necessary and what, if any, documents to bring with you.

- **Housing Counselors**

Homeowners can work with not-for-profit housing counselors to assess options, negotiate with lenders and find free, local legal services and other resources.

Beware of Rescue Scams

Foreclosure rescue scams can waste your money, ruin your credit record, and wipe out any equity you have in your home. Be suspicious of anyone that solicits you for

a mortgage modification, especially if they charge an upfront fee. Many for-profit companies will promise help, then not deliver. Others may charge you for a service that you can get for free from a not-for-profit counselor that is funded by the Attorney General's Office or the federal government.

Loan Modification Scams: Scam artists scour foreclosure notices and filings to find potential victims desperate to save their homes. Many use official-looking logos, names or website addresses to make you think they are part of an official government program, such as the federal HAMP program or the National Mortgage Settlement.

Lease-back or Repurchase Schemes: They offer to pay your mortgage and rent your home back to you. This scheme often involves signing over the deed to your home with the option to buy it back later. The terms of such transactions are often so complex or fraudulent that homeowners are rarely able to repurchase their home. The homes are sometimes sold to another party without the homeowner's knowledge.

**For more information call 855-HOME-456
or visit www.AGHomeHelp.com**