

Dedication ■ Professionalism ■ Standards

National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling



Setting the Standard for Success

www.homeownershipstandards.com

National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling

Helping individuals and families to achieve the dream of homeownership is no small challenge. Homeownership education and counseling is a critical step in producing an informed consumer who is better equipped to

sustain homeownership. Making the commitment to provide quality counseling and education services that strengthen long-term homeownership success takes a focused effort on the part of every stakeholder in the process. This is why a collaborative effort of housing industry partners developed the National Industry Standards—to

“Together with our partners we have developed national standards for homeownership education and counseling that will create a level of quality and consistency across the industry, advancing sustainable homeownership and the achievement of the American Dream for low- and moderate-income families. NeighborWorks® America’s commitment to quality, objective homeownership education and counseling extends beyond our network and the homeownership educators and counselors we train and certify through the NeighborWorks® Center for Homeownership Education and Counseling. We hope these standards will enable families to make informed, responsible choices on the path to homeownership.”

Ken Wade
CEO
NeighborWorks® America



help practitioners and organizations serve families and communities with consistent service and professional excellence.

The National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling are a set of guidelines for quality education and counseling services in the homeownership field. Organizations are encouraged to adopt these guidelines and incorporate them in everyday practice.

“Bank of America has long supported quality home buyer education for all consumers. Improved standards in this area are critical to helping more deserving families achieve the dream of owning a home and, as importantly, helping them keep their homes. We are proud to be able to work with these leaders in the industry to support responsible home purchases and ensure the consumer’s best interests are at the forefront of every home finance transaction.”

Floyd Robinson
President
Bank of America Consumer Real Estate and Insurance
Services Group



National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling

Setting the Standard for Success

Homeownership counselors and educators play a vital role in building strong communities. Unifying the industry on the issue of education and counseling standards is the first step to achieving that goal on a national level.

The National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling have drawn upon a variety of sources including existing standards used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and local, regional, and national housing counseling organizations. Input on the standards was gathered by the Advisory Council for the National Industry Standards from many industry partners, including national lenders, GSEs, HUD, mortgage insurers, executive directors and counselors of local, regional, and national organizations.



“MGIC has long been a believer in the power of an educated and well-prepared borrower to sustain homeownership over the long term and build wealth through equity build-up. This effort to create and promote national standards for homeownership educators and counselors is critical to assuring more borrowers are prepared to be successful homeowners. Now more than ever, the mortgage and real estate industries need to embrace the role of homebuyer education and counseling to help American households buy homes and obtain financing terms that are appropriate for them.”

Curt Culver
*Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
MGIC Investment Corporation and Mortgage Guaranty
Insurance Corporation (MGIC)*

“As we strive to strengthen communities through home ownership, we understand the importance of providing reliable, consistent information to potential homeowners. That is why Chase supports National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling.”

Michael DuBois
*Senior Vice President
Chase*

Encouraging Nationwide Quality

The National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling focus on a set of six core areas.

Competency, including strong knowledge of the homebuying process, money management, etc.

Skills, including communication and listening skills, adult education and facilitation skills.

Training, with recommendations for a minimum number of hours of training.

Operational Knowledge, regarding programs, fundraising, marketing, etc.

Code of Ethics and Conduct, which practitioners should sign and abide by.

In addition, there are **Performance Standards** for practitioners, which include standards for delivery, curriculum, recordkeeping, and reporting.

Benefiting Organizations, Practitioners, and Communities

Full adoption of standards throughout the industry will create a high level of quality and professionalism that current and future clients will come to recognize and expect.

High standards encourage excellence and help guide professional conduct and decision-making in the field.

Organizations, practitioners, and aspiring and existing homeowners benefit from the standards in a number of ways.



“Over the past 10 to 15 years, Network member organizations have helped tens of thousands of families to become first-time homebuyers or to avoid the loss of their homes. These standards will help our members promote sustainable homeownership in their communities.”

Thomas Bledsoe, President
Housing Partnership Network

“Founded on the belief that all Americans should have the opportunity to own a home, Countrywide Financial Corporation applauds the collective effort in the launch of Homeownership Education and Counseling. Countrywide is committed to helping people achieve and maintain home ownership and firmly supports efforts that improve the quality and reach of financial education, particularly to lower- and moderate-income individuals and families.”

Mary Duron
*Executive Vice President
Countrywide Financial Corporation*

“Freddie Mac believes comprehensive, consistently applied counseling and education will help countless families to find affordable and sustainable housing choices. We congratulate this industry commitment to national standards for quality homeownership education and counseling as a vital step in ensuring successful long-term homeownership opportunities.”

Craig Nickerson
*Vice President Expanding Markets
Freddie Mac*





National Industry Standards help organizations to:

- Promote sustainability for homeownership in the community
- Create consistencies in content delivered to clients across the nation
- Raise awareness for the organization and homeownership counseling/education field
- Gain the public's trust
- Encourage practitioners to perform to the highest level of professionalism
- Promote sustainability for organizations that adopt the standards by reassuring funders and fee-paying clients of the quality and consistency of their services
- Allow consumers to identify organizations that adopt the standards to ensure they are receiving high quality, ethical service
- Elevate the industry reputation for quality service delivery

Join In:

For complete information about the National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling, and how your organization can sign up to adopt the standards, we recommend that you review the National Industry Standards Guidelines and Benchmarks at the link below. This publication provides homeownership educators and counselors with a full description of the standards and the National Industry Code of Ethics and Conduct.

National Industry Standards help practitioners to:

- Increase knowledge and skill-set to best serve clients
- Earn the trust of their clients
- Distinguish themselves professionally
- Advance their career
- Enhance their credibility and image

Standards support homeowners—those in homes and those in the homebuying process by:

- Providing them with correct and consistent information
- Providing a solid source of information to draw on before and after the home purchase
- Ensuring counselors and educators have the tools and knowledge to support them
- Encouraging counselors and educators to serve them with competence, fairness, and respect

“Homeownership counseling is an increasingly important service in the Latino community. The national standards being introduced today will raise the bar for counseling providers—this means higher quality service for our families.”

Lot Diaz
*Vice President of Housing and Community Development
National Council of La Raza*

Download copies and obtain more information at
www.homeownershipstandards.com.

Advisory Council for the National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling

Bank of America
Chase
Chrysalis Consulting Group, LLC
Citi
Community Development Corporation of Long Island, Inc.
Consumer Credit Counseling Services of San Francisco
Countrywide Financial Corporation
Fannie Mae
The Housing Partnership Network
Federal Reserve Board
Freddie Mac
Minnesota Housing
Mortgage and Credit Center
Mortgage Guaranty Insurance Corporation (MGIC)
NAREB-NID
National Association of Realtors®
National Council of State Housing Finance Agencies
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
NeighborWorks® America
NHS of Great Falls
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Wells Fargo

*The Advisory Council for the National Industry Standards for
Homeownership Education and Counseling was convened and staffed by the
NeighborWorks® Center for Homeownership Education and Counseling (NCHEC).*

Mike Haley, Minnesota Housing
Chairman

Cora Fulmore, Mortgage & Credit Center
Vice-Chair

Jayna Bower, NeighborWorks® America
Director, NCHEC



**National Industry Standards for
Homeownership Education and Counseling**

1325 G Street, Suite 800

Washington, DC 20005

www.homeownershipstandards.com

866-472-9477