

Buying A Manufactured Home Not on Leased Land

A Quick Guide For Consumers & Real Estate Professionals

What is a Manufactured Home?

Manufactured homes are often referred to as “mobile homes,” but technically, that is an outdated term. Mobile homes were built prior June 15, 1976. A manufactured home is a factory-built dwelling built after June 15, 1976. This date is important as it signifies when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) implemented the Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards (HUD Code), which regulates mobile home construction. Unlike modular homes, manufactured homes are delivered to the site on a chassis and can be placed on leased land or private property. When a manufactured home is placed on land (not leased), it can be financed like a traditional home—if it meets certain requirements. Otherwise it is likely a cash-only property.

Needing A Mortgage? Lending Tips For FHA/VA/USDA

Always confirm with a lender that specializes in manufactured home lending for the most current programs and options for manufactured home lending. The following is intended to provide general guidelines while considering buying/selling a manufactured home on its own land.

Year Built - Data Plate (Compliance Certificate)

Homes must be built after 1976 to both meet HUD safety standards and be financeable & insurable. Homes built prior to 1976 will have very limited financing options. There will be a paper label inside the home (often found in a kitchen cabinet, closet, or electrical panel) and includes the manufacturer, model, serial number, and date of manufacture.

Frame Size/Type (Single-Wide vs Double-Wide)

Many lenders require the home to be a double-wide (at least 20 feet wide) to obtain financing. Single-wides are often not eligible, but a lender may confirm if there is a current program available.

Intact HUD Tag (Certification Label)

Must contain a certification label (commonly known as a HUD tag) to show it meets current safety standards set by HUD, including body and frame requirements, thermal protection, plumbing, electrical and fire safety. This looks like a metal plate affixed to the manufactured home and is required to obtain financing. It should be visible (not painted over or hidden by siding).

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Title Elimination

Without title elimination, the home is considered personal property (like a vehicle) which can limit the financing options. If permanently affixed to the land and title is eliminated, the manufactured home becomes real property. Contact your title company to confirm the status.

Foundation Certification & Tie-Downs

Must have foundation “tie-downs” also known as a foundation certification from an engineer. If the manufactured home has moved “twice”, they are not typically eligible for financing as it could disrupt the foundation and integrity of the home - ask the homeowner if the home has moved from its original location. You can contact an engineer to confirm the tie downs or to obtain a new foundation certification.

Insurance

Contact an insurance agent/broker early in the home-buying process to understand options for insuring a manufactured home. A lender will need a copy of an Insurance Binder in order to finalize a home loan.

Permits

Any alterations to the home will require a permit, inspection, and approval by the state. Alterations include installation and replacement of major fixtures of the house including the furnace, A/C, water heater, wood stove/pellet stove but may also include:

- Electrical Panel
- Roofing
- Siding
- Additions & Decks (decks must be freestanding)

Additional Resources

Washington – Labor & Industries

<https://lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F622-049-000.pdf>

Idaho – Division of Occupational & Professional Licenses

<https://dopl.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/BLD-MFG-Installation-Standards-2018.pdf>

Oregon – Building Codes Division

<https://www.oregon.gov/bcd/man-home-own/Documents/ManHomeOwnDocTransacGuideInteractive.pdf>

Example of a Hud Tag:



Best Choice
REALTY