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# Jeffco Has Programs to Rehab Homes of Low & Moderate Income Families

When you hear the name Jefferson County Housing Authority, you probably, like me, think of subsidized housing.

Think again. One of the agency's most valuable programs is designed to help homeowners keep their homes in good repair.

The program is available to residents of unincorporated areas of Jefferson County, plus the cities of Golden, Lakewood, Wheat Ridge, and other participating municipalities. Arvada has a similar program of its own — from what I've been told, it is identical.

Basically, the program provides 3 to 5% loans up to \$25,000 for making essential repairs to your home — things like roof repair, structural issues, electrical, plumbing and heating improvements, energy efficiency, and retrofitting

for handicapped accessibility. There are income requirements. Your total household income must

not exceed limits based on HUD guidelines. For a family of one, the limit is \$40,200. For a family of four, it is \$57,450.

If at least one member of your household is over 62 or disabled, and if your family income is within the limits referred to above, you could qualify for a 3% deferred

loan which does not have to be repaid at all until the home sells or it is no longer your residence.

One of the best features of this program is that the homeowner is given free help soliciting contractor bids and negotiating the repairs so that you don't get a bad deal. We hear all too many stories of poor and elderly homeowners getting ripped off by contractors, and I

wouldn't be surprised if the fear of being ripped off is a major reason some people hesitate to hire a contractor for essential repairs. This program takes away that fear.

Repayment terms for the loans are designed to be manageable, too. After all, the purpose of the loan is to keep you safely in your home, not lose it to foreclosure.

You can learn more by calling 303-422-8600, x114, or visiting the agency's website, [www.jcha.org](http://www.jcha.org). Arvada residents should call 720-898-7498.

**Note:** Ownership of the home has to be in the name of the qualifying homeowner..

There's a national non-profit called **Rebuilding Together** which provides totally free rehabilitation and repairs for low-income homeowners. Their target population includes the elderly, veterans, the disabled, and those displaced by natural disasters. You can learn more about them at their website, [www.rebuildingtogether.org](http://www.rebuildingtogether.org).

## REAL ESTATE TODAY



By JIM SMITH, Realtor®

## Tips on Hiring the Right Realtor®

Notice that I didn't say "the right real estate agent." That's because the first and most important tip is to make sure you agent is a member of a Realtor association. In Jeffco, that usually means the Jefferson County Association of Realtors (JCAR). By joining a local association, the agent is a member of the Colorado and National associations, too (CAR and NAR).

I'm not only a member of JCAR, I'm also on its Board of Directors.

Tip #2, if you're looking for a listing agent vs. a buyer's agent, is to focus on the agent's marketing

skills. He may not find the buyer himself, but his job is to maximize the exposure of your home to buyers and to the agents who represent them. Nowadays, Internet exposure counts the most, so find out which agents in your ZIP code do the best job of promoting their listings on the Internet, primarily on [realtor.com](http://realtor.com), the number one real estate web site. Go to [realtor.com](http://realtor.com) and put in your ZIP Code and price range, and look for homes that are presented the best, and interview those agents. For more tips, visit [www.JimSmithColumns.com](http://www.JimSmithColumns.com).



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