

We're so thrilled you've chosen to work with us for your new loan. Thank you! It probably goes without saying that our goal is to facilitate the quickest, smoothest and most drama-free loan closing possible. There are a few simple (and mostly common sense) things that you can do to assist us in making this happen. We want you smiling all the way through to closing!

Please read through the information below and let us know if you have any questions. (To make it worth your while, read closely enough and you'll spot a Secret Toy Surprise.)

Your Whereabouts and Communications

- **Be available**—At various times during your transaction (especially during the last two weeks prior to closing), we will need you to provide updated documents, sign things, acknowledge receipt of things and answer questions.
- **Check your email and voicemail** – We find email to be the most efficient and reliable means of communication during your transaction. Occasionally there are time-sensitive matters or questions that lend themselves better to a phone call. If there are good or bad ways to get a hold of you, let us know!
- **Don't go on vacation**—If you must leave town during your transaction, please let us know. We will do our best to work with your schedule. Do note, however, real estate transactions are linear and time-sensitive affairs, so delays can result if you are not available or cannot access documents or information.
- **Keep tabs on any cosigners**—If a family member is cosigning, remember they must be available too!

Documentation

- **Don't shred anything**—If you're a Compulsive Shredder, you can have a shred-fest after closing, but resist the urge to shred like usual until your loan has funded.
- **Don't pack financial documents**—Or at least keep all of your tax and financial records in one box on the top of the heap.
- **Save all (all) pages of bank, retirement and investment statements**—Yup, even the page for reconciling your statement and that page marked “this page is intentionally blank.”
- **Set up on-line banking**—There is no easier way to access the updated information we will likely need as you get close to closing.
- **If it has a dollar sign on it, save it**—We sometimes need to document things you wouldn't expect!

Employment and Income

- **Don't quit your job or change jobs**—Many job changes are no problem, but please keep us posted so we can make sure the timing will work out. Generally, we will need a pay stub from the new job before closing.
- **Tell us** if you will be on parental leave, medical leave, workers comp or on any other type of leave, paid or unpaid, during your transaction.
- **Tell us** if your hours, schedule or pay changes.
- **Occasionally we'll need your help with verifying your employment**—We'll be in touch for this assistance if necessary.

Assets and Money for Closing

- **Keep us posted on source(s) of the money you plan to use for closing**—Make sure we are aware of what funds you plan to use for closing and let us know if anything changes (say, you get a gift or win the lottery). Documenting funds for closing is one of the biggest potential sources of extra paperwork and hassles in your transaction.
- **Allow adequate lead-time for funds to be available**—You will be required to provide certified funds (a cashier's check or wire transfer) to the title company at least one business day prior to your closing date. If you need to sell stocks, arrange a retirement account loan, transfer funds from a non-local bank or get a gift, allow ample time. Be sure and find out how long your bank will hold a check before they will allow you to withdraw a cashier's check and plan accordingly.
- **Consider moving money via a wire transfer**—This can be a great way to move non-local bank funds. Wired funds have very little chance of being lost or delayed and are available immediately. The title company can receive wires on your behalf—ask your escrow officer for wiring instructions.
- **Find out your bank's wiring policies**—Wiring from a bank with no local branch, may require an in-person request. The alternative, having the bank mail a check, takes a little extra time.
- **Keep detailed records for all deposits you make during your transaction**—We need to be able to document the source of any non-payroll deposits you make during your transaction. Keep copies of all checks, including expense reimbursements, gifts (even if they are non-house related, such as birthday or wedding gifts), tax refunds, rent from roommates, and, well, anything else.
- **Do. Not. Deposit. Cash. Don't do it!**—Here we're talking cash-cash... greenbacks. Cash is generally impossible to track in a way that satisfies underwriting. If any of your funds (or gift funds) are cash, please talk to us. Do. Not. Deposit. Cash.
- **Let us know if you are getting a gift**—There is very (very) specific documentation we need to provide to properly document a gift. If you are going to get a gift (even a small one), let us know in advance of receiving it. It's much easier to document a gift as you receive it versus after the fact.
- **Don't open or close new bank accounts**—Even if you plan to change banks, we recommend you wait to do this until after closing.
- **Don't move money around unnecessarily**—It can be difficult to trace money that's been bouncing around between accounts. If you must consolidate funds for closing, keep records of the sending and receiving end of all transfers.
- **Don't sell anything without letting us know**—If you are going to sell a car or other asset, let us know ahead of time. We'll need copies of specific paperwork. And did I mention? Don't deposit cash.
- **Document the liquidation of any stocks, life insurance, mutual funds, retirement account funds (by loan or withdraw), options, etc.**—Your financial institution will generally provide you with transaction confirmations, loan documents, etc. Provide us with copies of these, copies of checks, deposit confirmations and/or wire transfer confirmations.
- **You found it... the Secret Toy Surprise!**—Okay it's not really a toy. But email me with the subject, "I want my coffee card!" and your next caffeinated beverage is on me. Let me know if you prefer Starbucks or Coava.
- **Let us know if you are getting an inheritance**—Generally we will need a copy of the will or other confirmation that you are an heir. If you are not named in the will, your inheritance will be documented, for our purposes, as a gift.

- **Unsecured loans are never an acceptable source of funds for closing** – If you feel you are coming up a little short for closing, you cannot take a credit card advance to make up the difference. Please let us work with you to figure things out.

Credit and Debts

- **Do not open any new accounts or make any large new purchases**—Wait until after closing to buy furniture, appliances, a car or make any other significant financial move. If something unavoidable comes up, please talk to us.
- **Talk to us before paying off any significant bills**—Doing so may deplete cash required for you to qualify for your loan (even if it is not cash you need to use to close). If you plan to pay off a bill or are required to pay off a bill as a part of your loan approval, we strongly recommend doing this through the title company at closing. Documenting that you've paid off a bill outside of closing can be done, but it is a real hassle!
- **Pay your bills on time**—Duh, right? If something slips through the cracks or you receive a collection notice, please let us know right away.
- **Keep credit card and credit line at similar or declining levels**—Credit scores are very sensitive to credit card balances, especially on cards with low limits.
- **Do not cosign on any new loans**—Until the person you cosigned for has made a year of payments, this will be viewed as your debt.

Legal & Tax Matters

- **Let us know if there are any liens or judgments** filed against you or if you are involved in a lawsuit.
- **Let us know** if you pay child support or alimony.
- **Don't file for divorce**—If you file for divorce during your transaction, closing will be delayed until the judge has signed your divorce decree. This is true of legal separations too.
- **Let us know if you have any unpaid** local, state or federal taxes or other federal debts (such as restitution).
- **Let us know the status of your tax filing**—We are required to verify the filing of your most recent two years of federal income tax returns. If you have just recently filed, closing could be delayed. Talk to us so that we can avoid or minimize delays.
- **Provide us with all income tax extension forms and amendments**—If your tax return is on extension or you file an amended return, please provide us with copies of these forms.

Insurance

- **Make your insurance arrangements**—Before we can send out your closing papers, we must have a “binder” of coverage from the insurance agent you choose. If you are going to shop around be sure and do so at least two weeks before closing. At least ten days before closing, pick your agent, let them know you plan to work with them, verify they have all the information they need from you.
- **Let us know your agent's name** and contact information.
- **Don't forget to let your agent know about a move**—Even if you are keeping the same agent and coverage from your old house, don't forget to let your agent know you've bought a new house. They're not psychic!

- **Don't prepay for insurance**—You will pay for your insurance through closing. (Exception: Flood insurance, FEMA may require you to prepay for this.)

Et cetera, Miscellaneous and Sundry

- **Let us know if you've served in the military**—There are fantastic loan mortgage benefits for veterans and I might not have asked if you've served.
- **When in doubt, keep us in the loop!**—If a situation outside of what I've mentioned here comes up and it in any way affects your financial world let us know.

Thank you again for choosing to work with the Workshop Mortgage Team at Equity Home Mortgage. We're excited to assist you with your new home loan and we look forward to working with you toward a smooth closing!