

Steps to Claim a Neglected Home

Step 1: Identify Truly Abandoned Properties

Not every neglected home is abandoned. Sometimes, homes that appear empty still have an owner—whether it's a distant relative, a financial institution, or someone simply struggling to maintain the property. Before you assume a home is up for grabs, do your homework, check public records, and look for obvious signs of abandonment.



Step 2: Research Ownership and Legal Status

Even abandoned properties have a legal owner. You can't simply move in or sell it without taking the proper legal steps. If the homeowner has failed to pay property taxes for several years, the government may have placed a tax lien on the home. Understanding how the home is classified will help you decide how to acquire it.

Step 3: Legally Claim the Property

If the property isn't in foreclosure or up for a tax sale, you may be able to claim it through one of these methods: purchasing from the owner or lienholder, buying at a tax or foreclosure auction, or adverse possession (squatter's rights).



Step 4: Assess the Property's Condition

Once you've secured ownership or are in the process of acquiring the home, you'll need to evaluate its condition to determine whether it's worth restoring. Key areas to inspect include structural integrity, utilities, plumbing, and potential city violations.

Step 5: Restore or Prepare for Sale

Whether you're planning to live in the home, rent it out, or sell it for profit, the rehab process should focus on key priorities: addressing essential repairs, ensuring compliance with local regulations, and enhancing curb appeal.

