FHA Qualifying Income Checklist

For first-time homebuyers: learn what income a lender can document, verify, calculate, and count before you start house hunting.

Buyer-friendly rule: Your income is not just what you make. It is what the lender can prove, calculate, and reasonably expect to continue.

10 Income Items to Review Before You Shop

1. Stable Income Is it steady, documented, and likely to continue?	**6. Part-Time / Second Job** Have you had it long enough, and is it likely to continue?
2. Two-Year History Can you document your last two years or explain changes?	**7. Seasonal Income** Can you show a repeatable pattern and likelihood of rehire?
3. Salary Income Is your current salary consistent and easy to verify?	**8. Commission Income** Is it stable, documented, and not sharply declining?
4. Hourly Income Are your hours fixed, or will they need to be averaged?	**9. Self-Employment** Do your tax returns support the income you want to use?
5. Overtime, Bonus & Tips Do you have enough history for extra income to count?	**10. Non-Employment Income** Can benefits/support/retirement be documented and continue?

What to Do 12 to 6 Months Before Shopping

Review Income Early Income is not always counted the way buyers think it is counted.	**Gather Documents** Pay stubs, W-2s, tax returns, 1099s, P&L;, award letters, and proof of receipt.	**Build a Plan** Address income that is too new, variable, declining, undocumented, or likely to end.

Quick Readiness Score

Score yourself 1 to 5 on each item.
40-50: close to ready
25-39: needs a prep plan
Under 25: start early

Ready to see if your income is mortgage-ready?
Schedule your First-Time Buyer Income Readiness Review.

Before talking to a mortgage broker, do not: quit your job, switch W-2 to 1099, reduce hours, assume bonus/overtime counts, hide declining income, or wait until you are under contract to review income.

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