

A HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE FOR CALIFORNIA

Reverse and Retirement Mortgage Options for California Homeowners

A friendly, no-pressure guide to understanding your choices



Education first. No pressure. Ever.

Inside you'll find a plain-English look at HECM and jumbo reverse mortgages, a quick way to see where your home fits, and questions to ask any reverse mortgage professional.

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A Note from Angella



If you own a home in California, you've likely built a meaningful amount of equity, and you may be wondering what that equity could do for your retirement. I created this guide to share clear, honest information so you can decide whether a reverse or retirement mortgage program is right for you. There's no pressure here. My goal is simply that you feel informed and confident about your options, whatever you decide.

Why California Is Different

California home values are among the highest in the country. For many homeowners, that means a lot of equity and more than one reverse mortgage program worth knowing about. Two types are commonly used here:

HECM

Home Equity Conversion Mortgage

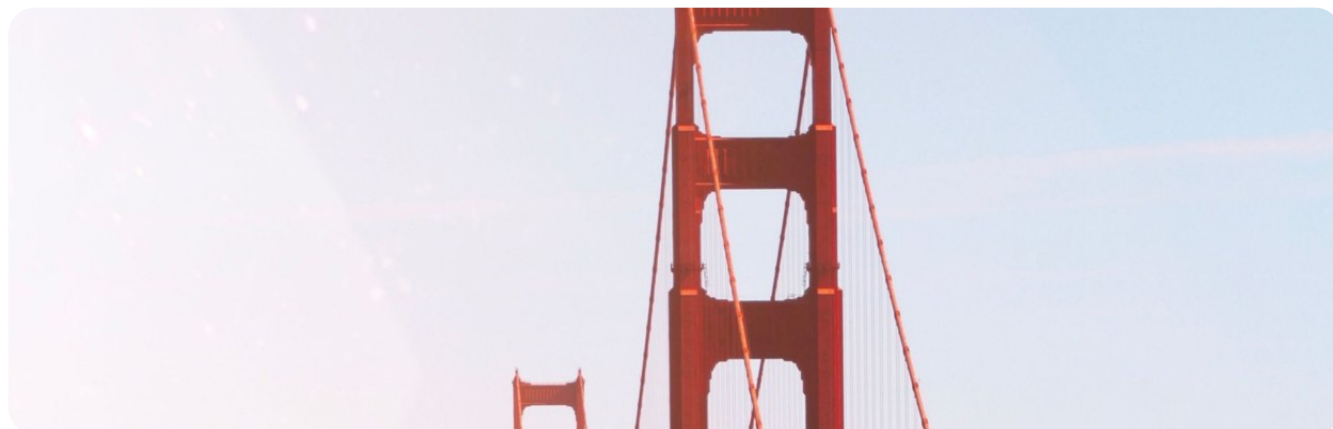
The federally insured reverse mortgage, available to homeowners age 62 and older. Insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA).

Jumbo

Proprietary reverse mortgage

A privately insured program that is not federally backed and generally allows higher loan amounts for higher-value homes.

Neither one is “better.” They simply fit different homes and different goals, and that's what the rest of this guide helps you explore.



HECM vs. Jumbo at a Glance

A side-by-side look at how the two programs commonly differ.

	HECM	Jumbo (Proprietary)
Insured by	Federal Housing Administration (FHA)	Private insurance, not federally backed
Maximum home value counted	\$1,249,125 for 2026, the same in every California county	Generally higher, so more of a higher-value home's equity may be considered
Counseling	Required, with a HUD-approved counselor	Varies by lender; ask about it
Often a good fit when	Your home value is at or below the limit, or you value a federally insured program	Your home value is well above the HECM limit
Terms and availability	Set by FHA guidelines	Vary by lender and can change, so ask for current options

Good to know: the 2026 HECM limit applies to FHA case numbers assigned on or after January 1, 2026, and it is updated each year. Jumbo options change often, so I'm always happy to share what's currently available.

Other Programs Worth Knowing About

Beyond HECM and jumbo, I also work with several programs designed for different goals. Availability and terms vary, so I'm always glad to explain exactly how each one is structured.

Hybrid retirement mortgage

Combines features of reverse and traditional mortgage programs, for homeowners who want more flexibility in how they use their equity and how the loan is repaid.

HELOC for seniors

A home equity line of credit you draw from as needed. Unlike a reverse mortgage, a HELOC typically involves monthly payments, and many carry variable rates.

2nd position reverse mortgage

A reverse mortgage placed behind your existing first mortgage, so you can access equity without refinancing a first mortgage you'd like to keep.

Partial interest payment mortgage

A program where you make partial interest payments along the way, which can slow how quickly your loan balance grows.

Not sure which one fits? That's exactly what a no-pressure conversation is for. We can look at your goals together and compare your options side by side.

Where Does My Home Fit?

A quick, informal way to think about it. Find where your home value falls compared with the 2026 HECM limit.

\$1,249,125 (2026 HECM limit)



Below the limit

Near the limit

Well above the limit

1

Below the limit

The HECM may be a natural place to start, since the full value of your home can be considered.

2

Near the limit

Both programs may be worth a look. A side-by-side comparison can be very helpful.

3

Well above the limit

A jumbo program may allow you to access more of your equity than a HECM would.

Every home and every homeowner is different, so treat this as a starting point for a conversation, not an answer. I'm happy to look at your specific situation with you, whenever you'd like.

Ways Homeowners Use Their Equity

There is no single “right” reason to explore a reverse or retirement mortgage. Homeowners tell me they're interested in:



Aging in place

Staying in the home and neighborhood they love



Paying off a mortgage

Freeing up monthly cash flow



Monthly income

Supplementing retirement savings



A line of credit

A financial safety net, which in some programs can grow over time



Home improvements and healthcare

Covering costs without selling the home

What Stays the Same

A reverse mortgage is a loan, and it helps to know what that means:

- ✓ **You keep ownership** of your home.
- ✓ **You remain responsible** for property taxes, homeowner's insurance, and home maintenance.
- ✓ **No monthly mortgage payment is required** on a reverse mortgage, though you may choose to make payments.
- ✓ The loan is typically repaid when the last borrower permanently leaves the home.

Questions to Ask Any Reverse Mortgage Professional

Whoever you speak with, these questions will help you feel confident:

- 1 Which programs, HECM and jumbo, could fit my home and goals?
- 2 What are all the costs, and how are they paid?
- 3 How would each option affect the equity I leave for my family?
- 4 What happens if my spouse or co-borrower and I have different needs?
- 5 How will you keep in touch with me after we talk?

A good professional welcomes every one of these questions.

Your Next Step, Whenever You're Ready

If you'd like to talk through your own situation, I'd be glad to help. There's no obligation and no pressure. I'll answer your questions, compare your options, and follow up in whatever way is most comfortable for you.

BOOK A TIME calendly.com/reverse-mortgages
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Important disclosures

This guide is for general information only and is not a loan commitment, financial advice or legal advice. Reverse mortgage eligibility, terms and costs depend on your individual circumstances, the lender, and FHA guidelines in effect at the time you apply. The 2026 HECM maximum claim amount applies to FHA case numbers assigned on or after January 1, 2026, and is updated annually. A reverse mortgage is a loan that must be repaid, typically when the last borrower permanently leaves the home. You remain responsible for property taxes, insurance and maintenance.

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