

Chehalis Tribe

Home Site Lease Program

Frequently Asked Questions

- Who is eligible?
Enrolled Chehalis Tribal members who can demonstrate the financial ability to build, or install a house on the leased property. (Some people with recent criminal convictions may not qualify. Talk to a Realty Program or a Planning Department representative to learn more.)
- How do I apply?
Tribal members can contact Tribal Realty at 360-709-1850 and set up an appointment to learn about the program and fill out an application.
- How long does the application process take?
After you apply and meet all of the requirements, it could take 2-8 weeks to receive a fully approved lease. The lease must be approved by the Business Committee and then processed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) before we can issue it, so you will need a little patience during the process.
- How much land can I lease?
You can lease up to half an acre of tribally owned trust land for a house.
- How long is the lease good for?
Leases will be for two 25 year terms (50 years total) and then they can be renewed. Each year of the lease costs \$1.00 (\$25.00 for the first 25 years and another \$25 for the next).
- Do I have to build a house, or can I live in an RV or a Camper?
You must build, or install a house. Mobile homes, pre-fabricated homes or site built homes are allowed. RV's and campers are not allowed as permanent homes, but can be used as temporary homes while you build your house. Temporary RV's must be connected to power, water and sewer.
- How long do I have to build my house?
You have 2 years after your lease is issued to build your house. If you do not build by the deadline, then your lease will terminate.

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- Is the Tribe building houses for us?
No, the Tribe is only leasing Tribal Trust land to tribal members, the rest is up to you.
- Is the Tribe providing home loans?
No, financing the house is up to you. You may qualify for a HUD 184 loan, or other home loans, from a bank, or other lending institution. Contact Tribal Realty for more information.
- Does the Tribe survey the lot and handle the permits?
No, you are responsible for getting the lot surveyed and handling all permits.
- Do I need a building permit from the Tribe?
Yes, after your lease is approved, you will need to apply for a Residential Permit to build your house. You will need to follow all of the Tribal Building Codes and have the home inspected by the Tribe before you can live in it. You might need other permits from the local county, or city, if you are planning to connect your driveway to one of their roads, or connect to their utilities. The Planning Dept. can tell you more about permitting.
- Can I build the house myself?
All construction must meet tribal building codes, so most people use a professional general contractor. If you are a skilled carpenter/contractor and have the appropriate business license, you could potentially construct your own house. The Planning Dept. can tell you about contractor requirements and building code requirements.
- What about water and sewer, or other utilities?
You are responsible for arranging for all utilities. Indian Health Services might have programs that can help and the Planning Dept. can provide you with their contact information.
- What about trees, fences or other structures on the property I want to lease?
All trees on Tribal Trust lands are property of the Chehalis Tribe. If any trees need to be removed to construct a house, the cost of that tree removal is the responsibility of the lessee. The value of the trees to be removed can be used to cover the cost of removal. If there is any excess value after the removal is completed, then that amount must be returned to the Tribe. If there are existing structures, fences, or landscaping that may interfere with the building of a new house, any removal or changes will be the responsibility of the lessee.

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- What if I want to sell my house in the future?

If you decide you want to sell your house, then you would need to sell it to another Chehalis Tribal member. The new owner would need to enter into a new lease for that property and then buy the house from you.

- What if I get the lease and pass away before it ends?

If you pass away during the lease, your spouse, or children can inherit the lease if they are enrolled Chehalis Tribal members. If they are not enrolled Chehalis Tribal members, then they could be entitled to a Life Estate.

- Can I rent my house, or property to other people?

No, renting the property is not allowed. This must be your primary residence and is only meant for your use.