MY EQUITY & FORECLOSURE POSITION WORKSHEET

Find your number. Know your timeline. Choose your exit.

Navigate. Protect. Recover.

Most homeowners in foreclosure never find out what their home is actually worth. That one missing number is what predatory investors count on.

This worksheet walks you through it: what you own, how much time you really have, and which of the four exits is yours. Answer honestly — nobody sees this but you.

By Peter Pedro

Navy Veteran | 39-Year USPS Retiree | Equity Protection Specialist

Educational information only — not legal or financial advice. Free HUD counseling: 800-569-4287

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET

1. Set aside 15–20 quiet minutes. Type directly into this PDF and save it, or print it.
2. Answer each section honestly — no one sees this but you.
3. Section 2 is the most important page. Do not skip it.
4. Bring the completed worksheet when you talk to an agent or an attorney.
5. Have them verify every timeline for YOUR state before you act on it.

IMPORTANT

Foreclosure laws, timelines, and procedures vary significantly by state and by loan type (FHA, VA, conventional). This worksheet is general education only — not legal or financial advice. Always verify your specific situation with a licensed real estate agent, a real estate attorney, and your lender.

SECTION 1: YOUR SITUATION SNAPSHOT

Before you can take action you need to know exactly where you stand. Be as specific as you can.

1 Basic Information

Your name:

Property address:

State & county:

Mortgage servicer / lender:

Loan type (FHA, VA, Conventional, Other):

Approximate mortgage balance owed: $

Monthly payment amount: $

Number of months behind:

2 Have You Received a Formal Foreclosure Notice?

Yes — I received a Lis Pendens or Notice of Default

Yes — but I'm not sure what type of notice it is

No — but I've been warned by my lender

I don't know / I'm not sure

WHAT IS A LIS PENDENS?

A Lis Pendens is a public filing that means the bank has started the legal foreclosure process. It is NOT the end — it is the beginning of a process that, in many states, takes months or even years before a sale occurs. Look it up at your county clerk's office or website. The exact timeline depends on your state's laws and your loan type.

SECTION 2: YOUR EQUITY POSITION — THE NUMBER NOBODY TOLD YOU

READ THIS BEFORE YOU FILL ANYTHING IN

In 2009, 26% of American homeowners owed more than their home was worth. Today it is about 2.2%. The average homeowner with a mortgage holds roughly $295,000 in equity — including many of the people currently in foreclosure.

That means most homeowners facing foreclosure are not losing a house. They are about to lose a large amount of their own money. Those are two different problems, and the second one is fixable.

3 Run Your Numbers

A What is your home worth today? $ ______

Zillow or Redfin are starting points. A real agent's CMA is free and far more accurate.

B Total mortgage balance owed $ ______

Call your servicer and ask for the current payoff figure — not the principal balance.

C Other liens against the property $ ______

2nd mortgage, HELOC, tax liens, judgments, unpaid HOA dues, contractor liens.

D YOUR EQUITY $ ______

A minus B minus C. This is the number the person at your door already knows.

4 What Your Number Means

IF D IS POSITIVE — YOU ARE IN AN EQUITY PROTECTION SITUATION

You are not in a short sale situation. Your goal is to exit without giving that money away. And here is the part almost nobody tells you: if the sale covers what you owe, you do not need the bank's approval for anything. The loan gets paid off at closing and you keep the difference. See Section 3.

IF D IS NEGATIVE — YOU MAY BE UNDERWATER

You may be among the roughly 2% of American homeowners who owe more than the home is worth. A short sale may genuinely be your best path, and it does require the bank's approval. See Section 3.

IF YOU DON'T KNOW — THIS IS THE MOST COMMON ANSWER

It is also the most dangerous one. Any licensed agent will run a comparative market analysis for free, with no obligation. Make that call before you speak to anyone offering to buy your house.

SECTION 3: YOUR FOUR EXITS — AND HOW TO TELL WHICH ONE IS YOURS

Almost every foreclosure ends one of four ways. Three of them you choose. One of them happens to you. Read all four, then check the one that fits your number from Section 2.

01 KEEP THE HOUSE

Reinstatement, repayment plan, forbearance, loan modification — or, if you have a VA loan, the VA partial claim (see Section 6).

When it fits: your income has recovered or will soon, and you want to stay.

02 TRADITIONAL SALE — THE EQUITY EXIT

You list the home and sell it. At closing the loan is paid off in full out of the proceeds and you keep every dollar above what you owed. No hardship letter. No tax returns. No bank negotiator. No approval.

When it fits: your number in Section 2 is positive. This is most homeowners.

03 SHORT SALE

The bank agrees to let you sell for less than you owe and — in most cases — writes off the difference. This one does require the bank’s approval, a full package, and patience.

When it fits: your number in Section 2 is negative. Roughly 2 in 100 homeowners.

04 FORECLOSURE / REO

The bank completes the process, takes the property, and the sheriff controls the timing. Any equity left over becomes surplus funds you then have to chase.

When it fits: never. This is what happens if you do nothing.

5 Which Exit Is Yours?

- Exit 1 — Keep the house
- Exit 2 — Traditional sale (I have equity)
- Exit 3 — Short sale (I am underwater)
- I still don't know — I need to find out what my home is worth first

The ONE thing stopping me from moving on this right now:

SECTION 4: KNOW YOUR REAL TIMELINE

Most homeowners assume it is already too late. Usually it is not. But the clock is real, and it is moving faster than it used to — the national average foreclosure timeline is now the shortest it has been since 2013. Find out how much time you actually have.

> **IMPORTANT**
>
> Timelines vary dramatically by state. Judicial foreclosure states (court involvement) take much longer. Non-judicial states move much faster. Your loan type affects it too. Never assume — verify for YOUR state.

6 Timeline Assessment

Date you first missed a payment:

Date of Lis Pendens / Notice of Default (if known):

Date of any scheduled sale (if known):

Has the bank contacted you directly? When?

Is your state judicial or non-judicial?

> **ACTION STEP — MAKE THIS CALL TODAY**
>
> Call your county recorder's office and ask, word for word:
>
> "What is the current status of the Lis Pendens filed on my property?"
>
> Write down exactly what they tell you:

7 Where Are You In The Process?

- I'm behind on payments but haven't received any official notice yet
- I received a Lis Pendens / Notice of Default
- The bank has scheduled a sale date
- I've already been contacted by the bank about the property
- I've started exploring options (forbearance, loan modification, etc.)
- I have no idea where I stand — I need help figuring this out

GENERAL FORECLOSURE PROCESS (VARIES BY STATE & LOAN TYPE)

Missed Payments → Lis Pendens → Loss Mitigation → Sale Scheduled → REO Sale

THE EARLIER YOU ACT, THE MORE OPTIONS YOU HAVE

SECTION 5: THE OFFER AT YOUR DOOR

Lis Pendens filings are public. Within days of yours being filed, your name and address went onto lists that get sold. Some of the people who call will be legitimate. Some will not. Here is how to tell them apart before you sign anything.

> **DO NOT SIGN A DEED TODAY**
> A quit claim deed signs your ownership — and every dollar of equity attached to it — over to someone else, usually for a fraction of what it is worth. It takes one signature and it is very hard to undo. No legitimate offer requires you to sign today.

8 The Five Sentences

If you hear these, slow down. None of them are illegal to say. All of them are designed to get you to move before you have your number from Section 2.

- "I can close this week — but I need you to sign today."
- "The bank is going to take it anyway, so anything you get is better than nothing."
- "Don’t bother with a realtor, they’ll just take a commission out of your pocket."
- "Just sign this deed and I’ll take care of the rest with the bank for you."
- "You won’t qualify for anything else. This is your only option."

9 Log Every Offer You Receive

Write down who contacted you, what they offered, and how it compares to your number in Section 2. Seeing it on paper makes the math obvious.

Who contacted me	Date	Amount offered	My equity (Section 2, box D)

> **THE ONE QUESTION THAT ENDS THE CONVERSATION**
> "What is your offer as a percentage of my current market value?"
>
> A legitimate buyer will answer it. Write down what they say — or what they do instead of answering.

SECTION 6: FOR VETERANS — IF YOU HAVE A VA LOAN

SKIP THIS SECTION IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A VA LOAN

If you do, read it twice. There are options here that do not exist for anyone else, and one of them opened six weeks ago.

The question I get most

"If they take my house, do I lose my VA loan benefit forever?" It is the fear underneath every other question a veteran asks me, and almost nobody answers it directly. Ask the VA about entitlement restoration — use the exact phrase, and write down what they tell you.

The VA Partial Claim — and why your servicer may not know about it yet

The old VASP program stopped taking submissions on May 1, 2025. Its replacement, the VA Partial Claim, opened for submissions on June 15, 2026. Servicers have until November 28, 2026 to finish building it into their systems, and the program is authorized through July 30, 2030.

WHAT THAT MEANS FOR YOU RIGHT NOW

The program exists. Many servicers have not finished implementing it. Veterans are being told "we don’t have that program" by front-line representatives whose systems are simply behind.

If you hear that: get the representative’s name and ID, ask for a supervisor, and ask them to confirm in writing which VA loss mitigation options you have been evaluated for. Log it below.

How it works: the VA advances funds to cover your missed payments. Instead of adding them to your loan balance at a new interest rate, the amount becomes a separate subordinate lien — no monthly payment and no interest. It can cover up to 25% of the loan balance, or 30% if you already used a COVID-era partial claim.

10 Your VA Call Log

Date I called: __________

Rep name & ID number: __________

What they said about the partial claim: __________

What they said about entitlement restoration: __________

Supervisor name (if escalated): __________

VA NUMBERS WORTH WRITING DOWN

VA Loan Servicing (loan help): 877-827-3702

Veterans Crisis Line: call or text 988, then press 1. Free, confidential, 24/7.

If you are in the place I was in when I lost my house — make that second call first. Everything on this worksheet will still be here afterward.

SECTION 7: FEAR VS. FACT

Fear thrives on bad information. Most homeowners facing foreclosure are carrying beliefs that are not accurate. Check the ones you currently believe, then read what is generally true.

"I got a foreclosure notice — I'm losing my house."

FACT: A notice begins a legal process. In many states that process takes months or years before any sale. You may have more time than you think — but less than you did five years ago.

"There's no equity left, so it doesn't matter."

FACT: About 2.2% of homeowners are underwater. The average homeowner with a mortgage has roughly $295,000 in equity. Until you complete Section 2, you are guessing about the single most important number in your situation.

"That investor's offer is probably fair."

FACT: He looked up your equity before he knocked. You can look up the same number for free. Do that first, then decide whether the offer is fair.

"The bank won't work with me."

FACT: The bank is running arithmetic, not sympathy. A defaulted loan costs a servicer roughly nine times more per year than a performing one. That is leverage, if you know it exists.

"I can't afford to hire help."

FACT: HUD-approved housing counseling is free. In a traditional sale the agent is paid out of closing proceeds, not out of your pocket. In most short sales the commission is typically paid by the bank at closing.

"It's too late to do anything."

FACT: Until a sale is completed, you are still the legal owner and you still have options. The earlier you act, the better those options are.

11 Your Own Fear

My biggest fear about this situation right now:

What would change if that fear turned out to be wrong?

SECTION 8: THE TEAM YOU NEED

You should not navigate this alone. But not all professionals are equal — especially when it comes to title companies.

12 Why The Right Title Company Matters

Most homeowners never learn this: not all title companies are the same. The difference that matters is whether they have a real estate attorney in-house.

STANDARD TITLE COMPANY	ATTORNEY-BASED TITLE COMPANY
• Handles closings and title searches	• Real estate attorney in-house
• No attorney on staff	• Can review your legal documents
• Cannot give legal guidance	• Direct lines to bank underwriters
• Cannot deal directly with bank legal	• Understands the negotiation legally
• May not understand distressed files	• Catches issues before they kill a deal

HOW TO FIND ONE

When you interview agents, ask them directly: "Does your title company have a real estate attorney in-house?" If the answer is no, ask why — and whether they work with one that does. An experienced distressed-sale agent will already have that relationship built.

13 Your Team Roster

Licensed Real Estate Agent (distressed / pre-foreclosure experience)

Ask how many distressed sales they have actually closed — not listed. And ask for a free CMA.

Name: ________ Phone: ________ Confirmed

Attorney-Based Title Company (with a real estate attorney)

Reviews legal documents and communicates with bank legal teams directly.

Name: ________ Phone: ________ Confirmed

HUD-Approved Housing Counselor — FREE

Free, government-funded. They help you understand your options. Call 800-569-4287.

Name: ________ Phone: ________ Confirmed

CPA or Tax Professional

A sale may have tax implications. Get advice BEFORE closing — not after.

Name: ________ Phone: ________ Confirmed

SECTION 9: VERIFY EVERYTHING

No worksheet, checklist, or guide replaces state-specific professional advice. Foreclosure laws vary by state. Timelines vary by loan type. The numbers change by county. Verify everything through two independent sources.

14 The Verification Chain

STEP 1 **Ask your real estate agent**

"How long does the foreclosure process typically take in our state for my loan type?"
"What is the deadline I am working with before the bank can schedule a sale?"
"What is my home worth today? Will you run me a CMA?"
"What are my realistic options at this stage?"

STEP 2 **Get a second opinion from the title company**

"What is the foreclosure timeline in our state for this type of loan?"
"Are there state-specific deadlines or rules I need to know about?"
"Is there anything on title I don't know about — liens, judgments, unpaid taxes?"

WHY TWO SOURCES

Your agent sees this from the sales side. The attorney at the title company sees it from the legal side. When both confirm the same thing, you can move with confidence. If they disagree, that is a red flag worth digging into before you decide anything.

15 Record What You Learn

What my agent told me about my timeline and my home's value:

What the title company / real estate attorney confirmed:

Do they agree? Any discrepancies to follow up on?

SECTION 10: YOUR 7-DAY ACTION PLAN

Knowledge without action is just entertainment. One action per day. That is it.

DAY 1

Find out what your home is worth. Call an agent for a free CMA, or start with Zillow / Redfin. Fill in Section 2.

Notes / result:

DAY 2

Call your servicer. Ask for your exact payoff figure — not the principal balance. Finish box B.

Notes / result:

DAY 3

Look up your Lis Pendens filing date at the county clerk's office or website.

Notes / result:

DAY 4

Call your county recorder's office and confirm the current status of the filing.

Notes / result:

DAY 5

Contact a HUD-approved housing counselor. Free. Call 800-569-4287.

Notes / result:

DAY 6

Interview at least one agent with real distressed-sale experience. Ask how many they have closed. VA loan? Call 877-827-3702.

Notes / result:

DAY 7

Review this worksheet. Verify your timeline. Decide which of the four exits is yours.

Notes / result:

THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING

Find out what your house is worth. Everything else depends on that number.

RESOURCES & REFLECTION

You have done the hard part — facing this honestly. Here is free help, and space to decide what happens next.

Free Resources

Veterans: VA Loan Servicing
If you have a VA loan, call the VA directly at 877-827-3702. Ask about the partial claim and about entitlement restoration.

HUD-Approved Housing Counseling
Free and government-funded. hud.gov/counseling | 800-569-4287

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
consumerfinance.gov/housing — understand your rights as a homeowner.

Your County Clerk's Office
Search "[your county] clerk of court" to look up Lis Pendens filings.

Your State Attorney General
Report anyone pressuring you to sign a deed. Search "[your state] attorney general consumer complaint".

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
Call or text 988. Veterans press 1. Free, confidential, 24/7. If this year has taken more from you than a house, start here.

Reflection

Now that you have completed this worksheet — what is the ONE thing you are going to do this week?

Who can you call for support? (Family, friend, counselor, agent, battle buddy)

What questions do you still need answered? Write them here so you are ready when you call.

YOU HAVE A NUMBER.
NOW YOU HAVE A CHOICE.

Most people facing what you are facing never find out what their home is worth. They sign something in a panic, or they wait until the sheriff decides for them.

You did neither. You sat down and did the math.

That puts you ahead of nearly everyone in your situation — and it means the next move belongs to you, not to the person knocking on your door.

> ***I'm not going to buy your house.***
> ***I'm going to tell you what it's worth.***
>
> — Peter Pedro, Navy Veteran

Navigate. Protect. Recover.

ForeclosureExitBlueprint.com

Peter Pedro | Navy Veteran | 39-Year USPS Retiree | Equity Protection Specialist

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