



## Frequently Asked Questions by Prospective Participants

### ***What is a Matched Savings Account?***

Matched savings accounts are designed to help families and individuals establish a pattern of regular saving and, ultimately, invest in first-time **home purchase, post-secondary education, or small business start-up or expansion** expenses. They're commonly referred to as IDAs (Individual Development Accounts).

### ***What do you mean by “matched”?***

The Matched Savings Program offers a 2:1 savings match – that means for every dollar you save we will add another two dollars added to your total account balance.

### ***Is there any limit as to how much I can deposit?***

Yes, there is a limit of \$600 per year which you can save and receive matching funds; however, you can participate in the Matched Savings Program for three years. If you save \$600 per year you will receive \$1,200 per year in matching funds making a total of \$1,800 per year in accumulated savings. **If you save the maximum all three years you will have \$5,400!** (\$1,800 of participant savings + \$3,600 in match = \$5,400). If at the end of the three years you have not made your purchase the matching funds are forfeited.

### ***Where are savings deposited?***

Our matched savings accounts are held by Greater TEXAS Federal Credit Union. The account is a simple savings account jointly owned between Foundation Communities and the account holder. Matched savings accounts are not assessed any monthly service fees. There is no minimum balance requirement, but if at any point you withdraw all of the money you have deposited it will be closed following the credit union's normal procedures. The match money you earn through saving is kept in a parallel account. When you're ready to make a withdrawal, the match money will be withdrawn from the parallel account by means of a check made out to the vendor.

### ***How do I know if I am eligible for the program?***

Residents of Foundation Communities' family properties (Buckingham, Cherry Creek, Daffodil, Sierra Ridge, Sierra Vista, Southwest Trails, Trails at the Park, Trails at Vintage Creek, M-Station, Peters Colony, Shadow Brook, and Sleepy Hollow) may be eligible for the program. Residents must have *earned* income (wages, salaries or tips) that falls at or below \$21,780 for an individual, \$29,420 for a household of two, \$37,060 for a household of three, and \$44,700 for a household of four.

### ***Once I open my account, what are the program requirements?***

Participants commit to living on a Foundation Communities' property for at least one year after opening the account. Additionally, participants commit to making regular monthly deposits into their accounts. There is no minimum or maximum monthly deposit amount. Deposits can be made in person at any Greater TEXAS Federal Credit Union branch or through direct deposit. Greater TEXAS Federal Credit Union participates in “Shared Branches” which means you may make a deposit into your Greater TEXAS Federal Credit Union account at other select credit unions including A+ Federal Credit Union, University Federal Credit Union, and TruWest Federal Credit Union.

All program participants complete a six hour personal finance course offered by Foundation Communities. The course is offered several times per year at Foundation Communities' properties. For a current class schedule, visit our website: [www.foundcom.org](http://www.foundcom.org), click on "Get Financially Stable" then "Economic Education." You may also contact the course instructor directly at 512-610-4021 or via email at [MM@foundcom.org](mailto:MM@foundcom.org).

In addition to completing the personal finance course participants are required to complete goal-specific training. Participants saving for first-time home purchase complete a homebuyer education course offered free on-site by Foundation Communities. Participants saving for business complete eight hours of business training and participants saving for post-secondary education complete an education plan. Please visit our website for additional information.

### ***What is the minimum length of participation?***

The minimum participation is six months, and the maximum participation length is three years.

### ***How soon can I make a matched withdrawal?***

You are eligible to request your funds once you've completed the financial education requirement, your goal-specific training, and have been an active participant for six months.

### ***What if I have an emergency and need some of my money?***

In certain emergency situations, you may withdraw some of your savings before you are ready to purchase your chosen goal. Such withdrawals do *not* include savings matches. And, of course, you are always free to close your account, withdraw from the program, and receive all of your savings at any time.

### ***How do I receive match funds?***

Matched funds are made available to you when you're ready to purchase your goal. At that time a vendor check will be issued directly to the company, institution or individual furnishing all or a part of a your goal (a title company, wholesale supplier or community college, for example).

### ***Can I open a matched savings account to save for my child's education?***

No. Funds accumulated through the Matched Savings Program must be used for your benefit; funds cannot be transferred to a child. In some cases a teen (usually a junior or senior in high school) may meet the eligibility requirements and can open a matched savings account on his/her own.

### ***Can I pay back student loans?***

No. Matched savings accounts can only be used for current tuition, fees and required books and supplies.

### ***How do I apply to participate?***

A program application is available on our website: [www.foundcom.org](http://www.foundcom.org), select "Get Financially Stable" and then select "Matched Savings Program", or you may call the number below to request your application. Once you have completed your application, you must meet in person with an program staff member to verify your identity and complete the paperwork to open your account at Greater TEXAS Federal Credit Union.

### ***Who do I contact if I have more questions?***

For additional information, contact the program office via email: [IDA@foundcom.org](mailto:IDA@foundcom.org) or 512-610-7381. You may also visit our website for additional program information.