

Home Equity Line of Credit Guide



 EQUAL HOUSING LENDER • MEMBER FDIC

Your home is likely the largest and most valuable asset you have. Let's use it.

Thank you for choosing First Federal Lakewood for your Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC)! We're so glad you're here.

When you closed on your HELOC with us, you didn't choose just another bank — you chose to join the thousands of people just like you who believe in our community and are committed to helping it thrive. By choosing First Federal Lakewood, you're helping grow the neighborhoods where we all live and work.

Whether you're renovating, consolidating debt, or planning for life's next big moment, your HELOC gives you flexible access to the funds you need, when you need them. In this guide, we'll cover:

- **HELOC Activation Checklist:** Make sure you're ready to get the most out of your HELOC.
- **Frequently Asked Questions:** Get answers to common questions about your HELOC.
- **Expert HELOC Advice:** Learn practical strategies for putting your HELOC to use.

Let's get started!



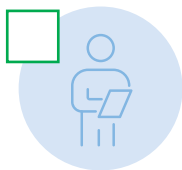
HELOC Activation Checklist

Now that you've closed on your Home Equity Line of Credit, let's make sure you're taking advantage of these great services!

I have:



Enrolled in Online and Mobile Banking*



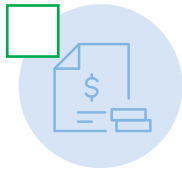
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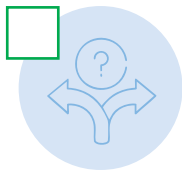
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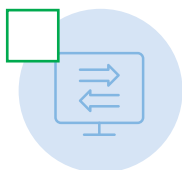
GOOGLE PLAY



Signed up for eStatements in my online banking account



Decided whether you'll pay your HELOC using AutoPay, online and mobile banking, visiting a branch or mailing a payment.



Linked my checking account to easily take out money or make payments on my line of credit



Checked my credit score with Credit Expert powered by SavvyMoney® in my online banking account and get instant support if I have questions

Frequently Asked Questions

Account Access & Management

How do I access my HELOC account online or through mobile banking?

Just log in to Online Banking at FFL.bank or open the FFL Mobile App. You'll see your credit line, current balance, transaction history, payment due dates, and available funds — all in one place.

How do I update my contact information?

Need to change your phone, address, or email? Log in to online or mobile banking, call us at (216) 529-2700 or stop by any branch, and we'll update it for you.

How do I enroll in eStatements?

Log in to Online and Mobile Banking, select Account Services then eStatements to get started — it's secure, clutter-free, and easy!

Accessing Funds

How do I access the funds from my HELOC?

You can transfer funds through Online and Mobile Banking or through checks tied to your HELOC account.

Is there a minimum or maximum amount I can withdraw at one time?

Your loan documents will show your withdrawal limits. You'll have a minimum draw amount, and the maximum is your approved credit line. If you have any questions about your limits, don't hesitate to call us at (216) 529-2700 or stop by any branch!

Can I use checks or online transfers?

Yes! Many customers use their HELOC with checks or online transfers.

What do I do if I run out of checks?

If you need to reorder checks, you may stop by a branch, call us at (216) 529-2700 or log in to online or mobile banking and place a reorder.

Managing the HELOC

How do I monitor my balance and transactions?

Online and Mobile Banking will give you access to balance information, transaction history, and available credit anytime.

Can I increase my credit limit later?

If your home value has risen, you have the option to qualify for a higher limit through a new HELOC. Contact us to explore your options.

Interest and Payments

When do I start making payments?

During the draw period, you will make monthly interest-only payments. Once the draw period ends, you will begin making monthly principal plus interest payments.

How do I make a payment?

There are a few ways to make a payment on your HELOC:

- **AutoPay:** The most convenient option we offer, AutoPay, is free to use. Simply select the date you want your automatic payment pulled each month and we do the rest.
- **Online and Mobile Banking:** Make or schedule a payment on your HELOC from any First Federal Lakewood checking or by adding your account at another financial institution to Online and Mobile Banking.
- **In Branch or By Mail:** You may make a payment on your HELOC at any of our branch locations or by mailing your payment to First Federal Lakewood, Attn: Loan Service Department, 14806 Detroit Ave., Lakewood, OH 44107

Why do my payments keep changing?

Your payments may change when there is a change to the interest rate and/or if the number of days in a month changes.

Can I make principal payments during the draw period?

Absolutely! You can pay down the principal anytime, be either paying the balance down to \$0 through a lump sum payment or paying extra each month over time. If you pay your account down to \$0 during the draw period your account will not be closed and will remain open for future needs.

Draw and Repayment Periods

How long is the draw period?

The draw period is 10 years. During this time, you can borrow as much as you need from your HELOC and only pay interest on what you borrow.

What happens when the draw period ends?

After the draw period, you will no longer be able to draw from your HELOC and you'll move into the 10-year repayment period where you'll repay the principal and any accrued interest.

How is the repayment period structured?

You'll have 10 years of scheduled payments to fully repay the outstanding balance.

Fees and Costs

Are there any annual fees or maintenance fees?

There is a \$50 annual fee that is due around the anniversary of your HELOC account each year. You will see your first charge a year from when you opened your account.

Are there penalties for early repayment?

Usually, no, but it's always a good idea to verify with us based on the specific terms of your loan. Call us at (216) 529-2700 or stop by any branch!

Usage and Restrictions

What can I use my HELOC for?

You can borrow from your HELOC for any major expenses, from home improvements to education and medical expenses to debt consolidation!

Are there any restrictions on how I use the funds?

Generally, there are not any usage restrictions. It's very similar to using a credit card.

Can I use my HELOC to pay off other debts?

Many borrowers use a HELOC for exactly that. Because the HELOC interest rate is more favorable, it allows borrowers to consolidate higher-interest debt and pay it off faster.

Tax Implications

Is the interest on my HELOC tax-deductible?

Possibly, especially if used for home improvements! You'll receive a 1098 form if you paid \$600+ in interest. We always recommend checking with your tax advisor.

What documentation do I need for tax purposes?

We'll mail you a 1098 annually if your interest paid qualifies for deduction.

Closing the HELOC

How do I close my HELOC account?

If you're interested in closing your HELOC, call us or visit a branch. We'll walk through the rest of the process with you.

What are the steps and costs involved in closing?

The first step will be to repay any money borrowed from your HELOC and to pay off all interest. Once your balance is \$0, you can contact us or visit a branch to proceed with closing your HELOC account. There may be a small closing fee depending on your loan. We'll walk you through what to expect when you're ready.

Expert Financial Advice

We're here to help! A HELOC can be a flexible financial tool, but using it wisely is key. Here are four strategies to help you make the most of it.

- **Borrow only what you need:** HELOCs are revolving credit, which means you pay interest only on what you use
- **Make more than interest payments:** If you pay down principal during the draw period, you'll save on interest and owe less later
- **Plan for rate changes:** HELOCs typically have variable rates. If rates rise, payments will too, so it's smart to build flexibility into your budget
- **Use it strategically:** A HELOC can help you with home updates, education, or refinancing higher-interest loans



Visit our [Learning Center](#) for more guidance about HELOCs as well as budgeting, saving, paying off debt, and so much more!

Have questions about your new HELOC account or getting started? We're here to help!

Just chat us on [FFL.bank](https://www.ffl.bank), call (216) 529-2700, email info@ffl.net, or stop by a [branch](#) any time.

We're proudly rooted in the communities we serve. That means that we make decisions that benefit you, the overall local economy, and our employees — NOT shareholders. We give 5% of our net profits back to the community every year, and our employees donate an incredible amount of their time in support of various local events, organizations, and community service efforts.

If all this sounds a little unusual for a bank, it's because we're not just another bank. We're a mutual bank. And we've been deeply committed to the communities we serve for over 90 years.





FFL.bank

*Message and data rates may apply.



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NMLS# 697346