
 Call into your local branch

 1800 435 763

 www.ulsterbank.ie/managingdebt

Mortgage Arrears & Resolution Process (MARF)

Help for what matters

 **Ulster Bank**

This brochure is also available in Braille, large print, audio or on disk.
Please contact your local branch for details or Textphone 1800 924 615.

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The Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process

Anyone can get into difficulty managing their finances. Even small changes in your circumstances can put pressure on your mortgage repayments.

At Ulster Bank, we are committed to supporting you if you are in financial difficulty. We can help you take control of your debt and get back on track.

If you think you may have difficulty paying your Ulster Bank mortgage, or you are already behind in repayments, this guide will show how we can help you, through our Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP).

This guide forms part of our commitment under the Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears (CCMA) published by the Central Bank of Ireland.

We provide it to help people who think they may be in financial difficulty, those already in difficulty and those who have alternative repayment arrangements with us.

We will try to help you when your mortgage is in arrears. However, if you are in arrears on a mortgage that is not for your primary residence or your sole residential property in the state, we may not apply the Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears.

Our Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP) has five steps

Step 1 – Communication

Step 2 – Your financial information

Step 3 – Our assessment

Step 4 – Resolution

Step 5 – Appeals

Step 1: Communication

We can only help you if you keep in touch with us. If you have missed a mortgage repayment or think you might, call us on 1800 435 763. You can also contact your local branch, where a trained and dedicated mortgage adviser is on hand to help.

Step 2: Your financial information

So that we can figure out how best to help you, we will need to get up to date information about your income and expenditure. We will ask you to complete a Standard Financial Statement (SFS). This form is available in your local branch and on our website www.ulsterbank.ie/managingdebt. If you are in arrears with your repayments, we will send you one.

You may wish to get some independent advice to help you to complete the Standard Financial Statement (on the contact information page, you'll find details of **Money Advice & Budgeting Services**).

We require you to give a full and honest account of your financial situation. We use this information to make our decisions and to manage your case through the MARP. We may ask to see some documents to support the information you give us, for example, bank statements.

Step 3: Our assessment

Our Arrears Support Unit will review your Standard Financial Statement.

The unit will assess your mortgage, taking into account:

- Our personal circumstances
- Our overall level of debt
- The information you gave us in the Standard Financial Statement
- Our current repayment capacity
- Our previous credit history

Step 4: Resolution

We will then consider all the alternative repayment options. All options have their own terms and conditions. It is important to note that not all alternative arrangement options address the arrears. Subsequent repayment arrangements can be applied when your financial situation improves.

The options we may consider are:

- **Extend your mortgage term** – This means we are extending the term so that your monthly repayment will reduce. You pay less each month but you will pay more interest over the course of the loan.
- **Interest-only repayment on a temporary basis** – A temporary move to interest-only repayments where you pay only the interest on your mortgage, not the capital for a period of time. At the end of the temporary period, you still owe the outstanding capital amount.
- **Reduced repayments on a temporary basis** – You pay a reduced repayment for a specified period of time. This means your standard monthly repayment at the end of the arrangement will be greater than it is during the arrangement.
- **Postponement of monthly repayments for a defined period of time** – We postpone all or part of your monthly mortgage repayment for a defined period of time, if you have a temporary shortfall in income. Your normal monthly repayment at the end of this arrangement will be greater than it is now.

- **Changing the type of mortgage (except in the case of tracker mortgages) –** Moving to a different type of mortgage for a specified period may reduce your monthly mortgage repayments and associated assurance payments e.g. moving from a fixed rate mortgage to variable rate mortgage. However, your normal monthly repayment at the end of this arrangement may increase based on the current variable rate.
- **Capitalising the arrears –** If you are experiencing a short-term cash flow problem, we may add the arrears balance to the capital value of your mortgage. You then pay the arrears balance over the rest of the mortgage term.

If you have a tracker mortgage, we will not ask you to change to another type of mortgage unless you want to. For example, if you are having difficulty paying a tracker mortgage and the best alternative repayment arrangement for you is a fixed interest period, you will be able to go back to the original tracker mortgage at the end of the fixed interest period. When you revert to your original tracker mortgage the tracker mortgage rate will be determined by the ECB rate at that time. ECB rate changes can impact your normal monthly repayment or an alternative repayment arrangement.

Where we offer you an alternative repayment arrangement, we will explain it clearly including any implications it has for you.

We will stay in touch with you during your arrangement, however paying the mortgage remains your responsibility and if your financial circumstances change, you should contact us.

Your home is at risk if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage or alternative repayment arrangements.

Step 5: Appeals

You have the right to appeal:

- the decision made by our Arrears Support Unit
- our treatment of your case under the MARP process
- our compliance with the Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears

To appeal, please write to our Appeals Administration Team at: Appeals Board, Ulster Bank, Block B, Central Park, Leopardstown, Dublin 18. To appeal a decision made by our Arrears Support Unit you must submit your appeal in writing within 20 business days of receipt of our decision.

If you are unhappy with the decision of the Appeals Board, you have the right to refer the matter to the Financial Services Ombudsman, 3rd Floor, Lincoln House, Lincoln Place, Dublin 2. Telephone **+353 1 6620899** or lo-call **1890 88 20 90**. www.financialombudsman.ie/making-a-complaint

If you have any questions in relation to our five step Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process (MARP) please contact us.

Additional information

State supports

You may be able to claim state supports, such as Mortgage Interest Supplement or Mortgage Interest Relief.

Mortgage Interest Supplement

If you are unemployed or your pay has been reduced, you may be entitled to claim a Mortgage Interest Supplement to help you with your mortgage repayments.

To find out if you're eligible for this supplement, contact the Community Welfare Officer at your Local Health Centre or visit www.welfare.ie

Mortgage Interest Relief

Mortgage interest relief is a tax relief based on the amount of mortgage interest you pay in a given tax year for your primary residence. For more information on Mortgage Interest Relief visit www.citizensinformation.ie or www.revenue.ie

Fees

At Ulster Bank, we do not apply penalty interest fees or sur-charges in relation to mortgage arrears. However, we will continue to charge interest on your outstanding mortgage account balance, including any missed mortgage repayments. Also, where we have legal or administration fees, we will write to tell you about them and they will be applied to your mortgage account.

Mortgage protection and home insurance

You should check if your mortgage protection covers are still suitable where we have agreed an alternative repayment arrangement such as interest only or repayments breaks. You should still insure your home. You may need to seek advice in relation to this.

Contact information

Ulster Bank branches

We can help you best if you get in touch with us. To contact your local Ulster Bank branch you'll find the number listed in the phone book or on www.ulsterbank.ie

Ulster Bank Arrears Support Unit

If you are having difficulty meeting your mortgage repayments or you are already in arrears, we're here to help. You can contact our Collections and Recoveries team on **1800 435 763**.

MABS (Money Advice and Budgeting Service)

MABS is a Government agency that provides free, confidential and independent advice on your debt problems. There are offices all over Ireland.

Address: MABS 2nd Floor, Commercial House, Westend Commercial Village, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.

Telephone: **1890 283 438** (Mon–Fri 9am to 8pm)

www.mabs.ie

Citizens Information Board and MABS website

We suggest you visit the joint website for the Citizens Information Board and MABS, which provides information on the services and entitlements available to you, if you are having difficulty paying your mortgage.

www.keepingyourhome.ie

Court Service

The Courts Service can give you detailed information on the courts system and can answer any questions you have.

Address: 15 - 24 Phoenix Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7

Telephone: **01 888 6000**

www.courts.ie

Legal Aid Board

This organisation aims to provide professional, efficient, cost-effective and accessible legal aid. They will also provide you with legal advice.

Address: Quay Street, Cahirciveen, Co. Kerry

Telephone: **1890 615 200**

www.legallaidboard.ie

Code of Conduct for Mortgage Arrears

All banks operating in Ireland must follow a code of conduct. To see this Code visit the Central Bank of Ireland's website www.financialregulator.ie or call **01 224 6000**.

Recession Survival Guide

The National Consumer Agency has put together a free 'Recession Survival Guide' with tips and legal information that could come in handy. You will find this guide at: www.itsyourmoney.ie

Social Welfare Agencies

You may be entitled to help with your financial situation, so you should check up on any potential entitlements. For a list of social welfare agencies that may be able to assist you, visit www.welfare.ie

How to cut through the jargon

To know exactly where you stand financially, it's important to have a clear understanding of the words we use. Below is a list of the most common words you will come across when you deal with us. In addition, the National Consumer Agency website www.itsyourmoney.ie has a 'jargon buster' section which you may find helpful.

Definitions

Arrears

This is where a repayment has not been paid in full, on the agreed date as per your original contract.

Arrears Support Unit

This is our dedicated support unit that manages the Mortgage Arrears Resolution Process.

Term

This refers to the length of your mortgage, normally months or years.

Credit History

This is the track record of your repayments on loans/mortgages/credit facilities you have or had in the past. The Irish Credit Bureau provides records on all borrowings.

Tracker Mortgage

A tracker mortgage is a type of mortgage which changes its interest rate when the European Central Bank (ECB) rate changes.

Standard Financial Statement (SFS)

This is a form that banks use to collect financial information, so that we can assess your circumstances and come up with a solution to your financial difficulties.

WARNING: YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP PAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR ANY OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.

WARNING: VARIABLE RATE MORTGAGE – THE PAYMENT RATES ON THIS HOUSING LOAN MAY BE ADJUSTED BY THE LENDER FROM TIME TO TIME.

WARNING: DEBT CONSOLIDATION MORTGAGES – THIS NEW LOAN MAY TAKE LONGER TO PAY OFF THAN YOUR PREVIOUS LOANS. THIS MEANS YOU MAY PAY MORE THAN IF YOU PAID OVER A SHORTER TERM.

WARNING: INTEREST ONLY MORTGAGE – THE ENTIRE AMOUNT THAT YOU HAVE BORROWED WILL STILL BE OUTSTANDING AT THE END OF THE INTEREST-ONLY PERIOD.

WARNING: ENDOWMENT LOANS – THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE PROCEEDS OF THE INSURANCE POLICY WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO REPAY THE LOAN IN FULL WHEN IT BECOMES DUE FOR REPAYMENT.