media release

SBS Bank wins Canstar's Bank of the Year First Home Buyers Award

July 23, 2026: Over the past year, lower mortgage rates, a chilled housing market and the easing of the loan-to-value ratio restrictions have meant the stars have aligned for aspiring homeowners. In response, first home buyers (FHBs) have responded by taking a record number of new mortgages.

And for helping many of this new generation of Kiwis into first homes, SBS Bank is the winner of Canstar's **Bank of the Year First Home Buyers Award 2026**.

This year marks the fourth time SBS Bank has won Canstar's award over the past five years and, again, the win is anchored by the lender's FirstHome Combo: an FHB-only package combining a discounted 12- or 24-month fixed rate with cashback, insurance and KiwiSaver incentives.

Bruce Pitchers, Canstar NZ editor, says: "The FHB segment of the mortgage market remains a highly competitive space, with lenders actively vying for borrowers.

"And over the past five years, SBS Bank has been a clear leader in the field, thanks to its great FirstHome Combo, and incentives such as its Skip app.

"Together, SBS's innovations offer sharper rates, FHB exclusives, and thousands of dollars in cashbacks, which help make moving into a first home more affordable for a new generation of Kiwis. So, congratulations to the team at SBS Bank, for yet another very deserved First Home Buyers Award win."

Mark McLean, SBS Group Chief Executive, says the award reflects the bank's purpose and its focus on the future: "We're thrilled to receive this recognition from Canstar. SBS was founded on the belief that every Kiwi should have the opportunity to own their own home, and helping people achieve that dream remains at the heart of what we do today.

"As we continue investing in the future of SBS, we're focused on delivering for our members and supporting the next generation of homeowners. This award recognises the dedication of our people and the difference they make for members every day."

Canstar's Bank of the Year First Home Buyers Award

Canstar's expert research team assesses the winner of its Bank of the Year First Home Buyers Award using a bespoke rating methodology. The award recognises the institution that offers outstanding value home loans as well as additional services that benefit first home buyers in making an informed decision when purchasing a home.

The award sits alongside Canstar's other awards, covering banking, insurance and KiwiSaver products, which are designed to help consumers make more informed financial choices.

Click here for more information on SBS Bank's win.

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