

RENEWAL REQUIREMENT FOR PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS ELIMINATED THIS YEAR DUE TO PANDEMIC

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Taxpayers who received property tax exemptions last year will not have to renew them this year thanks to a special pandemic-related law. Ordinarily, senior citizens eligible for the Senior Freeze have to renew their exemptions annually, as do people receiving disability exemptions. This year, however, it will not be necessary to renew these and other property tax exemptions.

"The state legislature has decided not to require tens of thousands of taxpayers to deliver renewal documents to government offices during the pandemic," explained Connie Carosielli, Elk Grove Township Assessor. "Instead, for this year only, the Senior Freeze, Disabled Veteran and Disabled Person exemptions will be automatically renewed. In addition, automatic renewal of the Homeowner and Senior Exemptions, which was in effect before the pandemic, will continue.

What if I received an exemption last year but my eligibility for the exemption has changed? If there has been a change in your eligibility, you should contact the offices of the township or county assessor to ensure that you receive the correct exemption. One example of a change in exemption eligibility involves a senior citizen whose household income was below the \$65,000 eligibility threshold in prior years but is now above the threshold. Another example involves a disabled veteran whose level of disability is different now compared to a prior year.

What if I didn't receive an exemption last year but am now eligible for one? You will have to complete an exemption application by March 31. People who purchased new homes in 2019 should receive Homeowner Exemption applications in the mail for tax year 2020 (paid in 2021), but other taxpayers, such as those newly eligible for senior citizen or disability exemptions, will have to obtain application forms from the county assessor's website or the township office.

What are the eligibility requirements for senior exemptions on this year's bills? Those born in 1955 or earlier who used their home as a principal residence in 2020 are eligible for the Senior Citizen Exemption.

The Senior Freeze Exemption provides additional tax savings for low- to moderate-income seniors. To be eligible this year, the combined income of all people in the senior's household must have been less than \$65,000 in calendar year 2019, and the senior must have been an owner-occupant of the property since January 1, 2019.

Connie noted that savings from senior exemptions and all other exemptions will appear on second installment tax bills that will be mailed in the summer. In addition, she reminds residents that her office is available to help taxpayers. "The rules regarding exemptions can be confusing. Taxpayers with questions should feel free to call my office at 224-265-6110."

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