

General Residential Homestead Exemption

To qualify, the property must be designed or adapted for human residence and the homeowner must own the property on January 1 of the year application is made. The person claiming the exemption must reside at the property on January 1 and cannot claim a homestead exemption on any other property. If more than one individual (not a married couple) owns the property, each separate individual must make application if they reside at the property. Exemptions are allocated according to percent of ownership interest the applicant has in the property. The exemption application must be completed and include a driver's license or social security number and date of birth.

Over-65 Homestead Exemption

You may qualify for this exemption on the date you become age 65. You must submit proof of age. Acceptable proof includes a copy of the front side of your driver's license or a copy of your birth certificate. If you qualify for the Over-65 Exemption, there is a property tax "**ceiling**" that **automatically limits School taxes** to the amount you paid in the year that you qualified for the homestead and Over-65 exemption. A County, City or Junior College may also limit taxes for the Over-65 Exemption if they adopt a tax ceiling. Tax ceiling amounts can increase if you add improvements to your home (i.e., adding a garage, room or pool).

In addition, Over-65 homeowners who purchase or move into a different home in Texas may also **transfer the percentage** of school taxes paid, based on the former home's school tax ceiling. This is commonly referred to as a **Ceiling Transfer**. To transfer your tax ceiling for the purposes of County, City or Junior College District taxes, however, you must move to another home within the same taxing unit. You must request a certificate from the Appraisal District for the former home and take it to the Appraisal District for the new home, if it is in a different district.

Over-55 Surviving Spouse of a Person who Received the Over-65 Exemption

If qualified, a Surviving Spouse may receive an extension of the Over-65 exemption and the tax ceiling. In order to qualify, your deceased spouse must have been receiving the Over-65 exemption on this residence homestead or would have applied and qualified before the spouse's death. The Surviving Spouse must have been 55 years of age or older on the date your spouse died. You must have ownership in the home and submit proof of age and proof of death of your spouse.

Disability Homestead Exemption

Persons with disabilities may qualify for this exemption if they 1) qualify for disability benefits under the Federal Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance Program administered by the Social Security Administration **or** 2) have a physician's statement indicating the date the disability began and that you are unable to engage in any substantial gainful work for a period

which has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months or that can be expected to result in death.

If you qualify for the Disability Exemption, there is a property tax “**ceiling**” that **automatically limits School taxes** to the amount you paid in the year that you qualified for the homestead and Disability exemption. A County, City or Junior College may also limit taxes for the Disability Exemption if they adopt a tax ceiling. Tax ceiling amounts can increase if you add improvements to your home (i.e., adding a garage, room or pool).

In addition, Disabled homeowners who purchase or move into a different home in Texas may also **transfer the percentage** of School taxes paid, based on the former home’s school tax ceiling. This is commonly referred to as a **Ceiling Transfer**. To transfer your tax ceiling for the purposes of County, City or Junior College District taxes, however, you must move to another home within the same taxing unit. You must request a certificate from the appraisal district for the former home and take it to the appraisal district for the new home, if it is in a different district.

You may not receive both this exemption and the Over-65 exemption.

Surviving Spouse of a Person who Received the Disability Exemption

There may be additional benefits for the Over-55 Surviving Spouse of a person who was receiving the Disabled Person exemption before their death. You may contact the Customer Service department for additional information at (512) 834-9138.

Late Filing

When filing for the General Residential Homestead exemption and the Disability Homestead exemption, you must file an application no later than one year after the delinquency date.

Benefits of Exemptions

All school districts in Texas grant a reduction of \$15,000 from your market value for a General Residential Homestead exemption. Some taxing units also offer additional optional reductions for the homestead exemption. In addition, each school district will grant a minimum reduction of \$10,000 from the market value for an over-65 exemption. For optional exemptions, the governing body of each taxing entity decides whether it will offer the exemption and at what percentage or amount.

Other Exemptions

Disabled Veteran or Survivors of a Disabled Veteran

You qualify for this exemption if you are a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces and your service branch or the Veterans Administration has officially classified you as disabled with a percentage of 10% or more. You must be a Texas resident. Your application can apply to any property you own on January 1 on which property taxes are assessed. You must complete an application and attach a copy of a current dated letter from the Veterans Administration reflecting the percent of disability awarded. You must file the application by April 30 or no later than one year after the delinquency date. A surviving spouse or child may also qualify to continue this exemption; a surviving spouse may continue the exemption if the survivor does not remarry. When the disabled veteran attains age 65, is totally blind in one or both eyes, or has lost the use of one or both limbs, they will qualify for 100% of the amount offered regardless of the disability percentage awarded by the V.A.

A surviving spouse or child of an armed forces member killed on active duty may qualify for this exemption. The surviving child, must be under age 18 and unmarried, or surviving spouse must be a Texas resident. An application must be completed along with a letter from the Veterans Administration showing the person died while on active duty, copy of your marriage license; a surviving child must attach a copy of proof of age and relationship to the deceased.

Over-65 Tax and Disabled Person Deferral

If you are a homeowner who qualifies for the Over-65 or the Disabled Persons exemption, you may also defer or postpone paying any property taxes on your home for as long as you own and live in it. Check with your appraisal district for information about how to apply for this postponement. It is important to note that this deferral only postpones your taxes and does not cancel them. It also accrues eight (8) percent interest annually until the deferral is removed. When the property is sold or comes under the ownership of heirs, the taxes and accrued interest becomes payable.

Note: If you have an existing mortgage on your residence, the tax deferral does not prevent your mortgage company from paying delinquent taxes; a tax deferral applies only to the collection of taxes.

Charitable Exemptions

An organization that qualifies as a charitable organization is entitled to certain exemptions from taxation. To qualify, the organization must be organized exclusively to perform religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes, engage exclusively in performing one or more of many charitable functions. A charitable organization must be operated in a way that does not result in accrual of distributable profits, realization of private gain resulting from payment of compensation in excess of a reasonable allowance for salary or other compensation for services rendered, or realization of any other form of private gain, and some charitable organizations must be organized as a non-profit corporation as defined by the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act. See the Texas Property Tax Code in Section 11.18 for more details. Applications may be obtained from the appraisal district.

Religious Exemptions

An organization that qualifies as a religious organization is entitled to certain exemptions from taxation. To qualify, the organization must be organized and operated primarily for the purpose of engaging in religious worship or promoting the spiritual well being of individuals. The organization must be operated in such a way that no individual profits (other than salary) and the organization's bylaws, charter or other regulations must pledge its assets for use in performing the organization's religious functions. See the Texas Property Tax Code in Section 11.20 for more details. Applications may be obtained from the appraisal district.

Agricultural Appraisal

Land designated for agricultural use is appraised at its value based on the land's capacity to produce agricultural products. The value of land based on its capacity to produce agricultural products is determined by capitalizing the average net income the land would have yielded under prudent management from production of agricultural products during the five (5) years preceding the current year. Property owners may qualify for agricultural appraisal under two different laws. You may refer to Subchapter C, Section 23.41 and Subchapter D, Section 23.51 of the Texas Property Tax Code for details of these laws or you may consult with the appraisal district.

Freeport Exemptions for Business Personal Property

Material that is transported outside of this state not later than 175 days after the date the person who owns it on January 1 acquired it, or imported it into this state, and assembled, manufactured, repaired, maintained, processed, or fabricated and shipped the materials out of the state during the required time is freeport goods. An application for this exemption must be filed with the appraisal district by April 30 each year. Copies of this application complete with instructions and supplemental forms is available on this website or obtained from the appraisal district.