

What is the 100 Percent Disabled Veterans Residence Exemption?

The Texas Legislature has recently enacted House Bill 3613 which added Section 11.131 to the Texas Property Tax Code. This important legislation created an exemption from property taxes for veterans who are either 100% disabled or are unemployable. The exemption is applicable only to qualifying veterans' residence homesteads.

What are the qualifications for the new exemption?

You qualify for the new 100% homestead exemption if you meet these requirements:

- You own a home and occupy it as your residence homestead.
- You are receiving 100% disability compensation from the US Department of Veterans Affairs for a service-connected disability.
- You have a disability rating of 100% disabled or of individual unemployability.

Do I have to apply for the exemption?

Yes, the new exemption is not give automatically. Qualified veterans need to mail to Travis Central Appraisal District (TCAD) a completed exemption application form and proof of 100% disability or unemployability, as determined by the United States Department of Veteran's Affairs, in order to get the exemption on their account.

How do I get an application and where do I mail it?

Applications and evidence can be mailed to the following address:

Travis Central Appraisal District
Customer Service Division
Post Office Box 149012
Austin, Texas 78714-9012

Application forms may be found on the Travis Central Appraisal District website at www.traviscad.org. under the tab titled forms, called Disabled Veteran's Homestead Exemption.

How do I get the disability award letter?

To request the most current award letter veterans should contact the United States Department of Veterans Affairs at 1-800-827-1000 or the Travis County Veterans Service Office at (512) 854-9340. Taxpayers interested in finding out more about the program can contact our Customer Service Division at (512) 834-9138.

Do I have to apply every year?

No. Once your exemption is granted, you will not have to apply unless the chief appraiser requires you to do so in writing. If the VA reduces or changes your compensation level, disability rating, or individual unemployability designation, it is your responsibility to notify the appraisal district in writing.

How much of my home's value will it exempt?

If you qualify, your home will be totally exempt from property taxes in all jurisdictions, regardless of the home's value.

If I already have the disabled veteran's exemption why do I need to re-apply for this exemption?

Qualifications for the new homestead exemption differ from those for the prior disabled veteran's exemption. In particular, you must show that you actually receive 100% disability compensation for a service connected disability, and have a rating of 100% disability or individual unemployability.

My disability rating is 50%, but because I am over 65, I receive the maximum disability exemption. Do I qualify for the new homestead exemption?

No, you must be receiving 100% disability compensation and 100% disabled (or have a rating of individual unemployability) to qualify for the new exemption.

Will the VA send you information when my rating changes and will you automatically give me my exemption?

No, it is your responsibility to submit the application to the appraisal district and provide a copy of your disability compensation award letter.

If something happens to me, will the new homestead exemption pass to my spouse or children?

No. Only the disabled veteran can claim the new 100% homestead exemption.

If my survivors cannot get the 100% total homestead exemption can they still get the old disabled veterans exemption?

Yes. If qualified, the surviving spouse and children are entitled to get the partial exemption based on disability level. This will range from an exemption of \$5,000 to

\$12,000 depending on the level of disability at the time of the veterans death. It is important to stress that surviving spouses and children are NOT entitled to the 100% tax exemption, only to the partial exemption.

I don't currently have a homestead exemption. Do I need to apply for the regular homestead exemption in addition to this one?

You should also apply for the regular homestead exemption. This will ensure that you receive the maximum benefits of the regular exemption should your qualification for the new exemption change.

If I am in a hospital or nursing home can I still get the new exemption?

Yes, as long as you intend to return to the home when you are able.

My spouse and I own our home together, how is the new homestead exemption calculated?

If the home is community property, it is calculated as if you owned 100% of the home. If the home is not community property, the exemption is prorated in proportion to the value of your interest.

Can this exemption be applied to all properties owned by a veteran who qualifies?

No, this exemption can only be applied to a residence homestead of a disabled veteran.

A disabled veteran who owns property other than his residence homestead may apply for a different disabled veteran's exemption. This exemption is in Tax Code Section 11.22 and is applied according to the veteran's disability rating of 10% or higher. An eligible disabled veteran may receive both exemptions.

Can I apply the new exemption to my main home and get the general homestead exemption on my vacation home?

No. Both exemptions apply only to the home that is your principal residence. You can, however, apply the prior disabled veteran's exemption to your vacation home or other taxable property that you own.