

ENACTED PROPERTY TAX LEGISLATION – 2022 SESSION

Tax Assistance

Homesteads of senior residents. The law allows certain senior residents to stabilize, or freeze, the property taxes on their homestead. An applicant must be at least 65 years old, a permanent resident of the State, and must have owned a Maine homestead for at least ten years. As long as the individual files an application each year, the tax is fixed at the amount assessed in the year prior to the initial application. Eligible residents may transfer the fixed tax amount to a new homestead, even between municipalities. The State will fully reimburse municipalities for lost revenue. Effective August 8, 2022. LD 290, PL 2021, c. 751.

Current use programs. The law aligns the penalty provisions for tree growth, farm and open space, and working waterfront current use classifications. In addition, the law expands the penalty-free reclassification of land taxed under the Maine Tree Growth Tax Law and farm and open space law to include reclassifications into and out of working waterfront land. Effective August 8, 2022. LD 1917, PL 2021, c. 630, Part C.

Unorganized Territory

Conveyance of state interest in certain real estate in the unorganized territory. The resolve authorizes the State Tax Assessor to sell certain tax-acquired parcels located in the unorganized territory. Effective August 8, 2022. LD 1794, Resolves, 2021, c. 123.

Municipal cost component. The law is part of the routine annual process for establishing the costs of administering the unorganized territory of Maine. The costs approved by the Maine Legislature must be incorporated into the 2022 property tax levy in the unorganized territory. The unorganized territory property tax is collected as dedicated revenue to the Unorganized Territory Education and Services Fund. Effective April 18, 2022. LD 1987, PL 2021, c. 624.

Exemptions

Benevolent and charitable organizations. The law removes the requirement for benevolent and charitable institutions to be incorporated in Maine in order to be eligible for exemption from property tax. Effective August 8, 2022. LD 1917, PL 2021, c. 630, Sec. B-2.

Veteran exemption. This bill adds the period from February 1, 1955 to February 27, 1961 as qualifying service dates when determining eligibility for the veterans' property tax exemption based on dates of service. Effective August 8, 2022. LD 647, PL 2021, c. 682.

State Valuation

State valuation. The law requires municipalities to provide requested information to Maine Revenue Services as may be necessary to conduct the annual state valuation process. Effective August 8, 2022. LD 1917, PL 2021, c. 630, Sec. B-1.

Miscellaneous

Certified Maine Assessor exam. The law requiring Certified Maine Assessor exams to be held at least four times each year has been changed. The new requirement is to hold the exams as many times as necessary, but no less than two times each year. Effective August 8, 2022. LD 1757, PL 2021, c. 531, Sec. B-1.

True and perfect lists. The law allows assessors to request information from taxpayers regarding property qualifying for any exemption that is subject to full or partial reimbursement by the State. Effective August 8, 2022. LD 1917, PL 2021, c. 630, Sec. B-3.

Just value. The law codifies the process of assessment of improved property, by requiring application of the highest and best use as of April 1 each year to determine the value of improved property through the three methods of valuation, cost, income, and market. The law also clarifies that property with a restricted use is not comparable to property without the same restrictions. Effective August 8, 2022. LD 1129, PL 2021, c. 663.