



Homestead Exemption

Do All Homes Qualify For A Homestead Exemption?

No, only a homeowner's principal residence qualifies.

To qualify, a home must meet the definition of a residence homestead:

The home's owner must be an individual (**for example: not a corporation or other business entity**) and occupy the home as his or her principal residence on date of **January 1st** of the tax year.

If you are age 65 or older, or disabled, the January 1 ownership and residency are not required for the age 65 or disabled homestead exemption.

What Homestead Exemptions Are Available?

- General Residence Homestead
 - Age 65 or Older Exemption
 - Age 55 or Surviving Spouse of Qualified Individual for Age 65 or Older Exemption
 - Disabled Person Exemption
 - 100% Disabled Veterans or Surviving
 - Spouse of 100% Disabled Vet Exemption
 - Donated Residence Homestead of Partially Disabled Veteran or Surviving Spouse of Disabled Veteran Who Qualified for Donated Residence Homestead
 - Surviving Spouse of Member of Armed Forces Killed in Action
 - Partially Disabled Veteran or Survivor
- (Not Limited to Your Homestead)

What Is A Homestead?

A homestead can be a separate structure, condominium or a manufactured home located on owned or leased land, as long as the individual living in the home owns it.

A homestead can include up to 20 acres, if the land is owned by the homeowner and occupied for a purpose related to the residential use of the homestead.

How Much Will I Save?

An exemption removes part of the value of your property from taxation and lowers your tax bill. In addition to the state mandated exemption amounts for school taxes, each taxing unit decides whether to offer the optional exemption and at what percentage.

For example, Fort Bend County offers a 20 percent exemption for the Homestead exemption.

If your property were valued at \$200,000 and you qualify for the 20 percent Homestead exemption from the county (\$40,000), you would pay county taxes on your home as if it were worth only \$160,000.

The amount of savings depends on the exemption and the amount of exemption allowed by each taxing unit.



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As A Homeowner, Do I Get A Tax Break From Property Taxes?

You may apply for homestead exemptions on your principal residence.

Homestead exemptions remove part of your home's value from taxation, so they lower your taxes.

For example, your home is appraised at \$100,000, and you qualify for a \$15,000 exemption (this is the amount mandated for school districts), you will pay school taxes on the home as if it was worth only \$85,000.

Taxing units have the option to offer a separate exemption of up to 20 percent of the total value.

Do I need to file an application when I turn 65 or is it automatically added?

The Appraisal District can only automatically process the over 65 exemption if it has the appropriate documentation on hand.

Fort Bend CAD requires proof of age to grant an over 65 exemption.

Acceptable proof of age includes:

Either a copy of the front side of your Texas driver's license or Texas Identification card or a copy of your birth certificate.

It is always best to file an exemption application with the appropriate documents to ensure that the Over 65 exemption is processed.

When Do You Apply If You Are Turning 65?

You may apply on or after your 65th birth date. Once applied it will have an effective date of January 01 of the year you are applying.

Is it true that once I become 65 years of age, I will not have to pay any more taxes?

No, that is not necessarily true. If you are 65 or older your residence homestead qualifies for more exemptions which will result in greater tax savings.

The amount of the exemptions that are granted by each taxing unit is subtracted from the market value of your residence and the taxes are calculated on that "lower value".

In addition, when you turn 65, you may receive a tax ceiling for your total school taxes; that is, the school taxes on your residence cannot increase as long as you own and live in that home.

The ceiling is set at the amount you pay in the year that you qualify for the aged 65 or older exemption.

The school taxes on your home subsequently may fall below the ceiling. If you significantly improve your home (other than ordinary repairs and maintenance), tax ceilings can go up.

For example, if you add a room or garage to your home, your tax ceiling can rise. It will also change if you move to a new home.