

## What is an abatement?

As early as 1949, the Minnesota Legislature granted discretionary power to the County Boards and later to the Commissioner of Revenue to grant a reduction in the gross tax levied against a parcel if the parcel was erroneously classified as nonhomestead or if evidence was presented to substantiate a reduction in the assessor's estimated market value. An abatement, then, is an application for this method of appeal.

## Who can file an abatement?

Any property owner who feels that the property has been classified incorrectly or not valued equitably, and who can provide documented evidence of his/her claim. Abatements are only required for adjustments to value or property class for a prior year.

## Why file an abatement?

Your property class and value affect your property taxes. If your property class or value is incorrect, you may be paying an unfair share of the total property tax.

## How do I know when I should file an abatement?

Legitimate concerns about your value or property class should be discussed with the assessor. Most problems can be resolved before the abatement process becomes necessary. The need for an abatement occurs when a concern is not acted on in a timely manner. You can avoid the need to file most abatements by closely examining the value notice you receive each Spring. This notice tells you the market value that was placed on your property by the assessor and whether or not the property is properly classified. *An abatement will be necessary only if you fail to act immediately.*

## For how many years back can I file?

The discretionary power to abate has been granted by the Minnesota State Legislature to the Commissioner of Revenue, to the County Board, the County Assessor and, in cities of the second class, like Bloomington, to the City Assessor. *This means that an abatement may only be filed with an authorization from the City Assessor, and should only be considered if the error in value or property class was beyond the control of the property owner.*

Applications for abatements for the current year assessment involving value, exemption, and/or property classification, other than homestead, may be accepted the day following the adjournment of the County Board of Equalization and may be accepted until December 31 in the year the tax is payable.

Application for full year homestead abatements for the current assessment year may be accepted beginning approximately November 15 and may be accepted until December 31 in the year the tax is payable.

An application for an abatement may be accepted for two additional preceding years if a clerical error was made or if hardship, as defined by the City Assessor, can be proven by the property owner. Some excuses that do *not* constitute hardship:

- The inability to pay higher taxes.
- Forgetting to file for homestead in a timely manner.
- Homestead card lost in the mail.
- Death or illness of a family member other than the property owner.
- Divorce or separation.

## How do I file an abatement?

There are two basic types of abatements, homestead and value. Some of the requirements for each are different. Let's review one at a time.

### Homestead Abatements

Contact the assessor's office as soon as you realize that your property has not been properly classified as homestead. You must file an application for abatement with the Bloomington Assessor's Office.

As part of the application you must provide all of the following: 1) a copy of your deed or contract for deed, 2) the names and Social Security numbers of all the current owners, *and* if the property is NOT owner occupied, the names and Social Security numbers of all of the owner's relatives who occupy the property as their primary residence, 3) a home and work telephone number, 4) your previous address, 5) three forms of proof that will verify occupancy (If you are applying for a full homestead, proof as of January 2 is required. If you are applying for a midyear homestead, proof as of December 1 is required. A list of acceptable proofs is available from the Bloomington Assessor's Office.), 6) a copy of your driver's license, and 7) the reason your property was not properly classified as homestead. The documentation you provide will be verified, and abatement forms will be prepared by assessing staff for your signature.

### Value Abatements

Filing a value abatement is similar to filing a homestead abatement. However, the required documentation is a little different.

As part of the application for a value abatement you must provide all of the following: 1) a copy of your deed or contract for deed, 2) the names and Social security numbers of all of the current owners, 3) a home and work telephone number, 4) your estimate of the market value of your property along with any supporting documentation, 5) a copy of your driver's license, and 6) your reason for having to file the abatement. So we might better understand your concerns, you may be asked to discuss them with one of our appraisers. Then, abatement forms will be prepared for your signature.

## **Is there a cost to file an abatement?**

There is no cost for filing an abatement.

## **Can I be assured of receiving an adjustment?**

The city assessor, the county assessor, and the county board will consider your request for an abatement. Each level has the authority to deny or approve the abatement. If the abatement is denied at any level, the abatement process stops. The county board also has the authority to increase market values. Good supporting documentation will help towards a decision in your favor.

## **How long does it take to process an abatement?**

Hennepin County will notify you of the results of a homestead abatement in approximately 3 months. Value and exemption abatements may take a little longer.

## **What happens if my abatement is approved?**

Whether your abatement is approved or not, you will be notified by mail. You may be issued a revised tax statement and/or you may receive a refund of taxes that you have overpaid. You may be required to report any tax refund you receive as a result of overpayment of property taxes as income in the year you receive the refund.

Assessing personnel are available to help answer your questions Monday through Friday, from 8:00 am. to 4:30 pm. Our phone numbers are listed below.

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