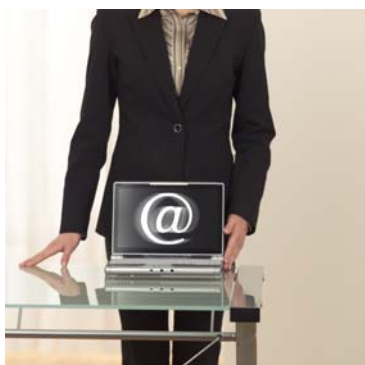


You should know that the longer you wait to pay past due taxes the more money you will pay because interest and penalties are added to these taxes.

Where To Apply

You can obtain a hardship application via the web or at your county treasurer's offices. In Wayne County, contact the Treasurer at www.waynecounty.com or visit 400 Monroe Street (Greektown) in Detroit.



How To Apply.

To apply, you will need:

Proof that you own the property

Proof of low income

Photo identification, and

Proof that you occupy the home.

If the hardship application is granted, you will obtain an **ADDITIONAL YEAR** to pay the taxes (including interest and penalties) causing the foreclosure.

Resources to Assist you:

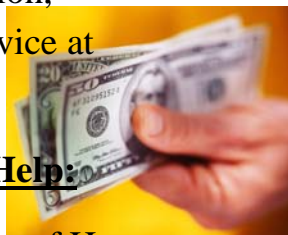
Free Legal Help

United Community Housing Coalition, 220 Bagley, Suite 224, Detroit: (313)963-3310 (Detroit Residents Only)

Legal Aid and Defender Association: (313) 964-4111

Michigan Legal Services: (313) 964-4130

If you do not qualify for free legal help, you may contact the Detroit Bar Association, Lawyer Referral Service at (313) 961-3545.



Possible Financial Help:

Michigan Department of Human Services through the State Emergency Relief (SER) program. Call (313) 456-1000 to locate the nearest office

Wayne County Veterans Affairs (313) 224-8162

Michigan Legal Services
220 Bagley, Suite 900
Detroit, MI 48226
313.964.4130

PROPERTY TAX HELP FOR LOW INCOME HOMEOWNERS

*Don't Lose Your Home Because
You Failed To Pay Property Taxes*

**READ THIS BROCHURE TO
FIND OUT HOW TO:**

**Stop falling behind
Challenge tax increases
Get relief from future taxes
Get more time to pay
Get free legal help
Get financial assistance.**



This guide is made possible with support from the Michigan State Bar Association. The Foundation's funding does not constitute an endorsement of content.

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TYPES OF PROPERTY TAXES

There are two types of property taxes that homeowners must pay each year: local (usually city) and county taxes. Local taxes are generally due in the summer, but (depending on your city) you may be able to pay half in the summer and the balance in January. County taxes are generally due in December. If the local taxes are not paid by March 1, they are added to the county tax bill for collection. If you are not sure whether you owe property taxes, you should check with the offices of both your local assessor and the county treasurer.



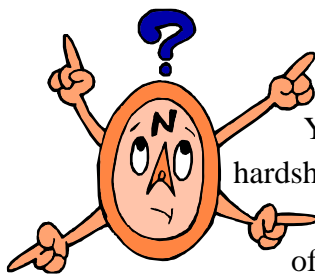
How taxes are determined?

The amount of your property taxes is based on the value of your property. Your tax bill should show a “taxable value” amount which is half of the estimated value of your home. If the city determines that your home has increased in value, you will be notified of a property tax increase. If you disagree with the increase, you may appeal the decision.

Property taxes for homeowners are lower than for investors. If the property is your primary residence, your tax bill should indicate “100% homestead”. If it does not, you are paying too much in taxes. You can correct this by filing a form with the City Assessors office.

HARDSHIP EXEMPTIONS (for current or future year taxes) If your household income is low, you may qualify for a hardship exemption for all or part of your property taxes for the current year or the next year (depending on when you apply). You must apply for this exemption **BEFORE** the taxes for your property are established for the year.

Generally, exemption requests are accepted in January through March for the tax bills that will be sent in July of the same year. If an application is made after that period, it will be reviewed for an exemption for the next year. A hardship exemption applies to current or future taxes only and will **NOT** affect taxes from prior years. However, it will keep you from falling further behind on your taxes.



Where to go to apply ?

You must apply for a hardship exemption at your local (city) assessor’s office. Each local government has its own procedure for applying. In Detroit, the taxpayer must go to the assessors’ office to request an application which is then mailed out with a return deadline.

What do you need to apply ?

The hardship exemption applies to homeowners with household incomes at or below the poverty level. You will need a deed or land contract to prove ownership and proof of income for all members in the household.

If the local assessor grants your request, all or part of your local taxes for that year may be eliminated. If you are denied, you may appeal to the State Tax Tribunal. **YOU MUST RE-APPLY EACH YEAR FOR AN EXEMPTION.**

HARDSHIP EXTENSIONS (for past due taxes)

If your household is low income you may also qualify for a hardship **EXTENSION** for taxes collected by the county treasurer. This extension will give you additional time to pay taxes you owe to prevent foreclosure.

In March of each year the county treasurer obtains a tax foreclosure judgment against all properties with unpaid taxes that are three years or older. For example, in March, 2006, the county treasurer obtained a foreclosure judgment for unpaid taxes for the years 2003 or earlier. Property owners had until March 31 to pay the past due taxes (for 2003 or any earlier years) with interest and penalties in order to redeem the property. If the payments are not made by that date, the property belongs to the Treasurer and is subject to auction in September. In Wayne County, the treasurer has accepted payments after the March 31 deadline in some years. If you missed the deadline, you should check with the Treasurer’s Office. You should never assume an extension will be granted beyond March 31 of any year.