

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2537 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY PROKOPIAK, FREEMAN, T. DAVIS, GUENST, HILL-EVANS,
BOROWSKI, MADSEN, GIRAL, PROBST, GALLAGHER, BOYD, CEPEDA-
FREYTIZ, SANCHEZ AND MENTZER, AUGUST 15, 2024

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, AUGUST 15, 2024

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in assessments of persons and
3 property, providing for senior citizen property tax freeze.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Chapter 85 of Title 53 of the Pennsylvania
7 Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a subchapter to read:

8 SUBCHAPTER G

9 SENIOR CITIZEN PROPERTY TAX FREEZE

10 § 8591. Scope of subchapter.

11 This subchapter relates to senior citizen property tax
12 freeze.

13 § 8592. Definitions.

14 The following words and phrases when used in this subchapter
15 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
16 context clearly indicates otherwise:

17 "Base payment." The amount of property tax paid by an
18 applicant in the base year.

1 "Base year." The tax year preceding the first tax year for
2 which a taxing authority implements the provisions of this
3 subchapter or the tax year immediately preceding an applicant's
4 approval for a tax freeze under section 8595 (relating to tax
5 freeze).

6 "Claimant." A person who has owned and lived in their home
7 for at least 10 years and meets one of the following
8 requirements:

9 (1) is at least 65 years of age or whose spouse, if a
10 member of the household, is at least 65 years of age;

11 (2) is a widow or widower at least 50 years of age; or

12 (3) is a permanently disabled person at least 18 years
13 of age.

14 "Department." The Department of Revenue of the Commonwealth.

15 "Household income." All income as defined in section 1303 of
16 the act of June 27, 2006 (1st Sp.Sess., P.L.1873, No.1), known
17 as the Taxpayer Relief Act, received by the claimant and by the
18 claimant's spouse during the calendar year for which a tax
19 deferral is claimed.

20 § 8593. Authority.

21 All political subdivisions shall have the power and authority
22 to grant annual tax freezes in the manner provided in this
23 subchapter.

24 § 8594. Income eligibility.

25 A claimant shall be eligible for a tax freeze under this
26 subchapter if the claimant and the claimant's spouse, if a
27 member of the household, have a household income not exceeding
28 \$45,000 annually.

29 § 8595. Tax freeze.

30 A claimant shall have real property taxes frozen at the

1 claimant's base year amount for as long as the claimant remains
2 eligible under this subchapter.

3 § 8596. Application procedure.

4 (a) Initial application.--A person eligible for a tax freeze
5 under this subchapter may apply annually to a political
6 subdivision. In the initial year of application, the following
7 information shall be provided in the application provided under
8 subsection (b):

9 (1) A certification that the applicant or the
10 applicant's spouse jointly are the owners in fee simple of
11 the homestead upon which the real property taxes are imposed.

12 (2) Receipts showing timely payment of the immediately
13 preceding year's base payment of real property taxes.

14 (3) Proof of income eligibility under section 8594
15 (relating to income eligibility).

16 (4) Other information required by the political
17 subdivision for the purpose of complying with section 8597(c)
18 (relating to program performance and annual report).

19 (b) Application form.--The department shall develop a
20 standardized application form for use by political subdivisions
21 in accordance with the following:

22 (1) The application form shall be substantially similar
23 to the application form for property tax or rent rebate
24 claims under Chapter 13 of the act of June 27, 2006 (1st
25 Sp.Sess., P.L.1873, No.1), known as the Taxpayer Relief Act.

26 (2) The department shall transmit the application form
27 to the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in the
28 next available issue of the Pennsylvania Bulletin and
29 transmit the application to political subdivisions upon
30 request.

1 (3) The department may post the application on a
2 publicly accessible Internet website.

3 (c) Subsequent years.--After the political subdivision
4 authorizes a claimant's initial application, the claimant shall
5 remain eligible for a tax freeze in subsequent years so long as
6 the claimant annually refiles the application with the political
7 subdivision showing that the claimant continues to meet the
8 eligibility requirements of this subchapter.

9 § 8597. Program performance and annual report.

10 (a) Duties of department.--The department shall:

11 (1) Compile a list of political subdivisions that grant
12 a tax freeze under this subchapter.

13 (2) Compile the aggregate number of individuals granted
14 a tax freeze in each political subdivision that grants a tax
15 freeze under this subchapter.

16 (3) Calculate the difference between the total amount of
17 real property taxes payable by the individuals granted a tax
18 freeze under this subchapter and the total amount of real
19 property taxes that would have been payable by those
20 individuals but for the tax freeze.

21 (4) Publish an annual report with the information under
22 paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) and post the annual report on the
23 department's publicly accessible Internet website.

24 (b) Costs.--The department shall collect the information
25 under subsection (a) in a manner to minimize the costs and
26 administrative requirements on political subdivisions.

27 (c) Duties of political subdivisions.--

28 (1) A political subdivision that has granted a tax
29 freeze under this subchapter shall notify the department in
30 writing and assist the department in compiling the

1 information under subsection (a).

2 (2) The reporting requirements under this subsection may
3 be submitted electronically to the department.

4 § 8598. Report.

5 The department shall submit a report with the information
6 under section 8597(a)(1), (2) and (3) (relating to program
7 performance and annual report) and any other relevant
8 information to the General Assembly before December 31, 2029,
9 for the purpose of reviewing the eligibility criteria and
10 effectiveness of the tax freeze under this subchapter.

11 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.