



COOK COUNTY ASSESSOR'S OFFICE
FRITZ KAEGI, ASSESSOR
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Scott Smith, Chief Communications Officer, Cook County Assessor's Office
312-919-3213, ssmith@cookcountyassessor.com

Senior and Homeowner Exemption Applications Now Available
New State Law Allows for Automatic Renewal of Senior Exemption

CHICAGO – Cook County Assessor Fritz Kaegi announced that exemption applications for the 2019 tax year for the Homeowner, Senior and Senior Freeze Exemptions are now available. Applications for additional exemptions will be available in early February.

“It is very important to me that my office reaches as many property owners as possible to ensure they are receiving all the money-saving exemptions to which they are entitled,” Assessor Kaegi said.

A new law passed by state legislators in partnership with the Assessor's Office now allows for the automatic renewal of the Senior Exemption. This means that a senior homeowner only has to apply for the Senior Exemption once, instead of applying each year to prove they are 65 years of age or older.

Anyone who received a Senior Exemption last year will not need to reapply this year. Prior recipients of the exemption will receive a postcard in the mail informing them that they no longer need to reapply. Property owners not currently receiving the Senior Exemption, and those who turned 65 in 2019, must apply for the exemption this year. Their Senior Exemptions will then renew annually.

Property owners receiving the Senior Exemption automatically receive the Homeowner Exemption. Homeowners Exemptions renew automatically each year. *Please Note: The Homeowner and Senior Exemptions are the only two exemptions that do not require annual applications.*

To qualify for the **Senior Exemption** for tax year 2019, a taxpayer must have:

- been liable for the payment of property taxes,
- owned the property or have a legal, equitable or leasehold interest in the property,
- been born in or before the year 1954, and
- occupied the property in 2019.

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Prior recipients of the Senior Freeze Exemption will receive renewal forms in the mail in January. Taxpayers not currently receiving the Senior Freeze Exemption, and those who turned 65 in 2019, must apply for the exemption and renew it annually.

To qualify for the **Senior Freeze Exemption** for tax year 2019, a taxpayer must have:

- been born prior to or in the year 1954,
- a total annual household gross income of \$65,000 or less for income tax year 2018,
- occupied the property as a primary place of residence on January 1, 2018 and January 1, 2019, and
- been legally responsible for the home's property taxes in 2018 and 2019.

Those receiving the Senior Freeze Exemption automatically receive *both* the Homeowner and Senior Exemptions.

"If you don't qualify for the Senior Freeze Exemption because you exceed the income level, this does not mean you will not be eligible for the standard Senior Exemption," Assessor Kaegi explained. "The Senior Exemption has no income restrictions and it is important for those seniors who are eligible to apply."

Renewal applications for the Persons with Disabilities, Veterans with Disabilities, and Long Time Occupant Exemptions will be mailed in early February and can be downloaded from the Assessor's website at that time at www.cookcountyassessor.com. Taxpayers may also call 312-443-7550 and request applications by mail.

"Our office will continue our outreach efforts throughout Cook County to increase awareness of our exemption programs and assist taxpayers with the application process," Assessor Kaegi said. "No property owner in Cook County should have to pay more than their fair share of property taxes."