

Homestead Exemption

Generally, a homeowner is entitled to a homestead exemption on their home and land underneath provided the home was owned by the homeowner and was their legal residence as of January 1 of the taxable year. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-40)

Application for Homestead Exemption

To be granted a homestead exemption, a person must actually occupy the home, and the home is considered their legal residence for all purposes. Persons that are away from their home because of health reasons will not be denied homestead exemption. A family member or friend can notify the tax receiver or tax commissioner and the homestead exemption will be granted. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-40)

Application for homestead exemption must be filed with the tax commissioner's office, or in some counties the tax assessor's office has been delegated to receive applications for homestead exemption.

A homeowner can file an application for homestead exemption for their home and land any time during the calendar year. To receive the homestead exemption for the current tax year, the homeowner must have owned the property on January 1 and filed the homestead application by March 1. Homestead applications that are filed after March 1 will not be granted until the next calendar year. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-45)

Failure to apply by the deadline will result in loss of the exemption for that year. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-45)

Exemptions Offered by the State and Counties

The State of Georgia offers homestead exemptions to all qualifying homeowners. In some counties they have increased the amounts of their homestead exemptions by local legislation above the amounts offered by the State. As a general rule the [exemptions offered by the county](#) are more beneficial to the homeowner.

Homestead Exemptions Offered by the State

- **Standard Homestead Exemption**

The home of each resident of Georgia that is actually occupied and used as the primary residence by the owner may be granted a \$2,000 exemption from state, county and school taxes except for school taxes levied by municipalities and except to pay interest on and to retire bonded indebtedness. The \$2,000 is deducted from the 40% assessed value of the homestead. The owner of a dwelling house of a farm that is granted a homestead exemption may also claim a homestead exemption in participation with the program of rural housing under contract with the local housing authority. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-44)

- **Individuals 65 Years of Age and Older May Claim an exemption from state tax on their home and 10 acres of land surrounding the home**

Individuals 65 years of age or over may claim an exemption from all state ad valorem taxes on their home and up to 10 acres of land surrounding the home. Ad valorem tax for state purposes will be due on the assessed value of land that exceeds the 10 acre limitation. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-48.3)

- **Individuals 65 Years of Age and Older May Claim a \$4,000 Exemption**

Individuals 65 years of age or over may claim a \$4,000 exemption from all state and county ad valorem taxes if the income of that person and his spouse does not exceed \$10,000 for the prior year. Income from retirement sources, pensions, and disability income is excluded up to the maximum amount allowed to be paid to an individual and his spouse under the federal Social Security Act. The social security maximum benefits for 2008 is \$52,440. The owner must notify the county tax commissioner if for any reason they no longer meet the requirements for this exemption. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-47)

- **Individuals 62 Years of Age and Older May Claim Additional Exemption for Educational Purposes**

Individuals 62 years of age or over that are residents of each independent school district and of each county school district may claim an additional exemption from all ad valorem taxes for educational purposes and to retire school bond indebtedness if the income of that person and his spouse does not exceed \$10,000 for the prior year. Income from retirement sources, pensions, and disability income is excluded up to the maximum amount allowed to be paid to an individual and his spouse under the federal Social Security Act. The social security maximum benefits for 2008 is \$52,440. The owner must notify the county tax commissioner if for any reason they no longer meet the requirements for this exemption. This exemption may not exceed \$10,000 of the homestead's assessed value. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-52)

- **Floating Inflation-Proof Exemption**

Individuals 62 years of age or over may obtain a floating inflation-proof state and county homestead exemption, except for taxes to pay interest on and to retire bonded indebtedness, based on natural increases in the homestead's value. If the appraised value of the home has increased by more than \$10,000, the owner may benefit from this exemption. Income, together with spouse or any other person residing in the house, can not exceed \$30,000. This exemption does not affect any municipal or educational taxes and is meant to be used in the place of any other state and county homestead exemption. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-47.1)

- **Homestead Exemption for Disabled Veteran or Surviving Spouse**

Any qualifying disabled veteran may be granted an exemption of \$50,000 from paying property taxes for state, county, municipal, and school purposes. The value of the property in excess of this exemption remains taxable. This exemption is extended to the unremarried surviving spouse or minor children as long as they continue to occupy the home as a residence. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-48)

- **Homestead Exemption for Surviving Spouse of U.S. Service Member**

The unremarried surviving spouse of a member of the armed forces who was killed in or died as a result of any war or armed conflict will be granted a homestead exemption from all ad valorem taxes for state, county, municipal and school purposes in the amount of \$50,000. The surviving spouse will continue to be eligible for the exemption as long as they do not remarry. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-52.1)

- **Homestead Exemption for Surviving Spouse of Peace Officer or Firefighter**

The unremarried surviving spouse of a peace officer or firefighter killed in the line of duty will be granted a homestead exemption for the full value of the homestead for as long as the applicant occupies the residence as a homestead. (O.C.G.A. § 48-5-48.4)

The homestead exemptions offered by the State can be represented by the following table:

Code	Description of	County	County	School	School	State
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	Qualifications	M&O Tax	Bond Tax	M&O Tax	Bond Tax	Tax
S1	Regular Owner Occupied Principal Residence	\$2,000	0	\$2,000	0	\$2,000
SC	Age 65	\$2,000	0	\$2,000	0	100% on home and up to 10 contiguous acres of land AND \$2,000 on balance of value
S3	Age 62 Net Income of Applicant & Spouse is less than \$10,000	\$2,000	0	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$2,000
S4	Age 65 Net Income of Applicant & Spouse is less than \$10,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	100% on home and up to 10 contiguous acres of land AND \$4,000 on balance of value
S5	100% Disabled Veteran; Unremarried Surviving Spouse of Disabled Veteran	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
SD	Age 65 - 100% Disabled Veteran; Unremarried Surviving Spouse of Disabled Veteran	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	100% on home and up to 10 contiguous acres of land AND \$50,000 on balance of value
SS	Unremarried Surviving Spouse of US Service Member killed in action	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
SE	Age 65 - Unremarried Surviving Spouse of US Service Member killed in action	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	100% on home and up to 10 contiguous acres of land AND \$50,000 on balance of value

SG	Unremarried Surviving Spouse of a Firefighter or Peace Officer killed in the line of duty	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
S6	Age 62 Federal Adjusted Gross Income of Applicant and all other persons residing in the home is less than \$30,000	Floating on home and up to 5 acres of land	0	\$2,000	0	Floating on home and up to 5 acres of land
S8	Age 62 Federal Adjusted Gross Income of Applicant and all other persons residing in the home is less than \$30,000 AND net income of Applicant and Spouse is less than \$10,000	Floating on home and up to 5 acres of land	0	\$10,000	\$10,000	Floating on home and up to 5 acres of land
S9	Age 65 Federal Adjusted Gross Income of Applicant and all other persons residing in the home is less than \$30,000 AND net income of Applicant and Spouse is less than \$10,000	Floating on home and up to 5 acres of land	\$4,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	100% on home and up to 10 acres of land

How to Figure a Homestead Exemption

The basic formula to figure the tax on a home using the State's standard \$2,000 homestead exemption is:

$$[(40\% * FMV) - \$2,000] * \text{millage rate} = \text{tax due.}$$

Example: If a person that owned a home with a market value of \$100,000 in an unincorporated area of a county where the millage rate was 25.00 mills, that person's property tax would be \$950.00 ([millage rates](#) for motor vehicles in 2008 were the same rates applied to real property in 2007).

Multiply \$100,000 by 40% which is equal to the assessed value of \$40,000 and subtract the homestead exemption of \$2,000 from the assessed value. Then multiply \$38,000 by .02500 which is equal to \$950.00.