

2012 Allegheny County Property Reassessments

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why did my property get reassessed?

A. Allegheny County was ordered by court to reassess all the properties in the County for 2012, that assessment will not be used until 2013.

Q. When will I receive my new assessment?

A. The County mailed out notices at the end of December to all City of Pittsburgh and Borough of Mount Oliver residential property owners. A second set of notices will be sent out to those property owners. If you have not received the notice, contact the Allegheny County Office of Property Assessment at 412-350-4600.

Q. How does the change in my property assessment affect my property tax bill?

A. The reassessment will not change your tax bill in 2012. The reassessment will be implemented and used for 2013 tax bills. Property taxes are calculated by applying the tax rate to the assessed value of the property. Municipalities must adjust their tax rate according to the results of the reassessment. Until the tax rates for 2013 are set by all the taxing bodies, there will be no way of knowing the exact amount of tax property owners will owe.

Q. When will I receive my tax bill?

A. The schedule for issuing the 2012 tax bills has not yet been set.

Q. Does the reassessed value include my exemption/abatement (e.g. Homestead Exemption & Senior Tax Relief)?

A. The reassessment will not change your abatements and exemptions including the Homestead Exemption and Senior Tax Relief. You will continue to receive those. The notices received from the county list the Market Value of your property, which does not include any abatements or exemptions. The tax bill will be determined by applying the tax rate after any abatements or exemptions have been subtracted from the Market Value.

Q. How did the County determine my property value?

A. The County notice has an explanation for the three methods of determining the Market Value of a property but does not include which method was used for individual properties.

Q. What if the property characteristics listed on the notice received are incorrect?

A. Property owners may request an informal review and/or file a formal appeal to correct the property characteristics. The deadline for requesting an informal review is February 15, 2012, and the deadline for filing a formal appeal is April 2, 2012. A complete listing of all the County information on the property can be found in the property record card.

Q. What is a property record card and where can I get mine?

A. A property record card is the County record of all the characteristics of your property. For example, square footage, number of rooms, condition of the property, etc. Most of the information is available on the County real estate website*, but for complete information, property owners may obtain a copy of a property record card for 54 cents by requesting a copy on the third floor of the County Office Building, 542 Forbes Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15219, directly across from the elevators.

Q. What is a parcel ID (block and lot number) and how do I find mine?

A. The parcel ID is a number assigned to your property by the County. This number can be found on the County real estate website* after entering your address. It can also be found on the letter you received from Mayor Ravenstahl, the notice you received from the County, your tax bill or your tax bill receipt.

Q. How do I request an informal review?

A. The informal review process, originally cancelled by the County, has been reinstated. The deadline for requesting an informal review is February 15, 2012. You can request an informal review by calling the Allegheny County Office of Property Assessment at 412-350-4600, or going online to apps.alleghenycounty.us/InformalAppeals .

Q. How do I file a formal appeal?

A. Property owners wanting to file a formal appeal must fill out a 2012 Assessment Appeal form. The deadline for filing a formal appeal is April 2, 2012. The forms are available from the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review on the Third Floor of the County Office Building, 542 Forbes Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15219, and on the County's website*.

Q. What is the informal review process and when will it take place?

A. Informal reviews provide property owners with the opportunity to correct any inaccuracies to the property characteristics, as well as to present evidence of what the owner believes the proper value to be. Only the property owner and the reviewer will be present at an informal review. **The informal review process has been reinstated and the deadline for requesting an informal review is February 15, 2012.**

Q. What is the formal appeal process and when will it take place?

A. The formal appeal process is free and provides property owners and taxing bodies with the opportunity to challenge the assessed value of a property. Once a property owner or taxing body has filed a formal appeal, the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review will schedule a hearing date and send out notice to the property owner and taxing body representatives.

On the date of the hearing, the property owner should arrive at the County designated location and sign in at the designated office. At the time of the scheduled hearing, a hearing officer will call the property owner and any taxing body representative into the hearing room. The hearing officer will record the hearing and swear in the parties. The hearing officer will receive all testimony and documentary evidence.

Property owners should bring at least three (3) copies of all evidence to the hearings. The property owner will be requested by the hearing officer to state his/her opinion of value. The hearing officer does not issue a decision. A written recommendation will be prepared for the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review. At a later time, the Board will make a decision that will be mailed to all parties.

Q. What is a hearing officer?

A. A hearing officer is a qualified real estate professional who conducts formal appeal hearings and makes a recommendation based on those hearings to the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review.

Q. What should I bring to the hearing?

A. A property owner may bring in evidence of:

- the value of the property
- the condition and physical characteristics of the property
- the condition of the neighborhood
- recent sales of the subject property
- recent sales of comparable properties within the neighborhood
- appraisals by a certified professional

These are some examples of what a property owner may bring, but this list is not exhaustive. The property owner will be requested by the hearing officer to state his/her opinion of value and to present any relevant testimony or evidence in support of that opinion.

Q. Should I hire an attorney?

A. It is entirely up to the property owner if they would like to hire an attorney. Some property owners do, and some do not.

Q. What if I am dissatisfied with the Board's decision?

A. Property owners have a right to appeal the decision of the Board to the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas. The appeal must be filed within 30 days of the mailing date of the Board's decision. There is a cost associated with this appeal.

Q. Do I need to pay my tax bill if I have filed for either an informal review or formal appeal?

A. It is important to pay your tax bill by the due date regardless of whether you have requested an informal review and/or filed for a formal appeal. If property owners anticipate a reduction in the value of their property, they may want to opt to pay on the installment plan. If a property value is adjusted, future installments will be adjusted accordingly. A refund will be issued to all those who have paid their tax bill in full prior to any downward adjustment on their assessed value.

Q. What if I can't attend my informal review or formal appeal hearing?

A. Property owners may elect to send an authorized representative to their hearing, but the designated person must have an authorized representative form signed by the property owner. This form is available from the County. In addition, property owners may postpone their formal appeal hearing one time by contacting the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review.

Q. Could the formal appeal hearing result in an increase in my property value?

A. A formal appeal may result in either an increase in value, a decrease in value, or no change in value.

*** For more information, visit:**

City of Pittsburgh property reassessment website:

AppealAssist.PittsburghPA.gov

Allegheny County website:

www.alleghenycounty.us

Allegheny County's Real Estate website:

www2.county.allegheny.pa.us/RealEstate/Default.aspx