

**FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS**

**Concerning Assessments,
Revaluations and
Property Taxes.**

“Why did this have to be done?”

Article 6 of the New Hampshire Constitution requires that “...there shall be a valuation of the estates within the state taken anew once in every five years, at least, and as much oftener as the general court shall order.”

In accordance with this provision, we have been directed by the New Hampshire Department of Revenue to adjust our assessed values to “market value” for tax year 2019.

We appreciate any constructive feedback you care to offer and are happy to answer any questions that you may have concerning these assessments or New Hampshire property tax laws in general.

“What’s this going to do to my taxes?”

Changes in assessed values brings absolutely no extra money into the town’s coffers. The town is only allowed to collect what the voters authorize it to collect via their votes on the town, school and precinct budgets (and what their representatives authorize at the county and state level).

Revaluations change the relative tax burdens between different types of properties because different types of property don’t always rise and fall in value at the exact same rates.

“How can you change my assessment when you haven’t been inside my house?”

We would be pleased to inspect your property at your request. We have been busy visiting homes since the last revaluation and leaving bright yellow door hangers requesting appointments if we didn’t find you home.

Given staff and budget limitations, we are only able to physically review about 1,000 properties annually. Most of the properties in town are either owned by people who do not live here full time or are owned by people who work long hours locally and so it is very difficult to find people at home during the business week. We do the best job that we can given these limitations and independent statistical analysis by the state shows that we tend to have accurate and equitable assessments overall.

“I own a manufactured home in a park. They don’t appreciate, they depreciate.”

Even manufactured homes are subject to the laws of supply and demand and, in periods where housing is at a premium, manufactured homes appreciate even as they get older.

“How can I file for an abatement?”

You must wait until the tax rate is set and the tax bills are mailed before you can file for an abatement.

Please keep in mind that the assessor cannot consider the amount of your tax bill or any increase in taxes when considering if a reduction in the assessed value is warranted. The burden is on the property owner to show that the assessed value does not represent market value as of April 1, 2019. This is typically done through comparable sales. Your first step should be to review your property record card for errors. You can print one out at the public terminal located in the Assessor’s office. There is no charge for your own home and, if you are unfamiliar with the system, we will be happy to assist you.

“Is there any kind of tax relief for people who may not be able to afford their property taxes?”

The town offers reduced assessments for residents over 65 on their primary domicile. You have to have been a New Hampshire resident for three years as of April 1. The deadline to file is April 15th so it is too late for this year and this tax bill.

These laws are for elderly people whose incomes may not have kept pace with inflation and now find they are unable to meet their property tax obligation. In order to qualify, your income from all sources cannot exceed \$37,000 (married) or \$28,000 (single). Assets cannot exceed \$77,000, *excluding the value of the home you are living in*. See the assessing staff for details.

The town also offers an exemption to those residents who are on social security disability and are unable to work. This exemption has a five-year residency requirement and has income limitations of \$25,000 (married) and \$19,000 (single) and a \$50,000 asset limitation, *excluding the value of the home you are living in*.

The town offers tax credits to qualifying veterans who are New Hampshire residents. Honorable service for 90 days is a requirement. See assessing staff for details.

It is no secret that property taxes in New Hampshire are very high. It is our primary source of government funding. These relief laws are in place to help us help you. If you need help, please don't be afraid to ask. We will confidentially do everything we can to assist you.

Dale B. Schofield
Assessor, Town of Conway

Written comments may be submitted to: Dale B. Schofield, Assessor
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