

Q&A on Tax Year 2020 Auto-Renewal of Exemptions

In response to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Illinois law (Public Act 101-0635) now authorizes Chief County Assessors to determine, for homeowners who meet certain conditions, that certain property exemptions applied for in taxable year 2019 can be automatically renewed for taxable year 2020.

Below are some answers to questions about this new process.

Q. Which exemptions will auto-renew next year?

A. The homeowner and senior exemptions currently auto-renew each year.

For tax year 2020 only, the senior freeze, veterans with disabilities, and persons with disabilities exemptions will auto-renew if the owner of record is the same on January 1st, 2020 as it was on January 1st, 2019, if the property owner has not asked for the exemption to be removed, and the exemption in 2019 was not determined to be erroneous.

Q. Which exemptions will not auto-renew?

A. The longtime occupant and returning veterans exemptions will not auto-renew. Applications will be sent to those who qualify.

Q. Will the above exemptions auto-renew in 2021?

A. *Only the homeowner and senior exemptions will continue to auto-renew.* The rest will require re-applying.

Q. What if a disabled veteran's disability has changed?

A. If a veteran's disability percentage has increased, he or she will need to submit an application for the higher disability rating with appropriate documentation. Otherwise, the exemption will renew at the same level.

Q. What if a homeowner does not want the exemption to renew because they no longer qualify?

A. They can contact our office by calling 312-443-7550 or email us via the website and we will take the appropriate steps to take off that exemption.

Q. What information will homeowners receive from the Assessor's Office about this change?

A. In January 2021, the Assessor's Office will send the usual mailings about exemptions:

- Purple mailer, to new homeowners
- Longtime occupant renewal (same as always)

In addition, because of the auto-renewal, a taxpayer may receive additional mailings:

- Yellow mailer, to people who we would have renewed but we've detected they're ineligible (i.e., death, change in residence, etc.)
- A letter explaining which of their exemptions will auto-renew



Q. How can a property owner see which exemptions they have now?

A. They can search for their property via the Cook County Assessor's website, then review the Exemption History and Status section of their property's details.

Q. When can homeowners apply for exemptions if they have not received them in the past?

A. The exemptions application period will open in January as usual. Additional information and communication about applying for exemptions online will be available soon.