
SENATE BILL 6912

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2008 Regular Session

By Senators Haugen, Swecker, Berkey, McAuliffe, Marr, Kilmer,
Rasmussen, Hargrove, and Fraser

Read first time 02/04/08. Referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

1 AN ACT Relating to increasing property tax relief for senior
2 citizens and persons retired by reason of physical disability to
3 qualify for property tax relief; amending RCW 84.36.381 and 84.38.030;
4 and creating a new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 84.36.381 and 2005 c 248 s 2 are each amended to read
7 as follows:

8 A person shall be exempt from any legal obligation to pay all or a
9 portion of the amount of excess and regular real property taxes due and
10 payable in the year following the year in which a claim is filed, and
11 thereafter, in accordance with the following:

12 (1) The property taxes must have been imposed upon a residence
13 which was occupied by the person claiming the exemption as a principal
14 place of residence as of the time of filing: PROVIDED, That any person
15 who sells, transfers, or is displaced from his or her residence may
16 transfer his or her exemption status to a replacement residence, but no
17 claimant shall receive an exemption on more than one residence in any
18 year: PROVIDED FURTHER, That confinement of the person to a hospital,

1 nursing home, boarding home, or adult family home shall not disqualify
2 the claim of exemption if:

3 (a) The residence is temporarily unoccupied;

4 (b) The residence is occupied by a spouse and/or a person
5 financially dependent on the claimant for support; or

6 (c) The residence is rented for the purpose of paying nursing home,
7 hospital, boarding home, or adult family home costs;

8 (2) The person claiming the exemption must have owned, at the time
9 of filing, in fee, as a life estate, or by contract purchase, the
10 residence on which the property taxes have been imposed or if the
11 person claiming the exemption lives in a cooperative housing
12 association, corporation, or partnership, such person must own a share
13 therein representing the unit or portion of the structure in which he
14 or she resides. For purposes of this subsection, a residence owned by
15 a marital community or owned by cotenants shall be deemed to be owned
16 by each spouse or cotenant, and any lease for life shall be deemed a
17 life estate;

18 (3) The person claiming the exemption must be (a) sixty-one years
19 of age or older on December 31st of the year in which the exemption
20 claim is filed, or must have been, at the time of filing, retired from
21 regular gainful employment by reason of disability, or (b) a veteran of
22 the armed forces of the United States with one hundred percent service-
23 connected disability as provided in 42 U.S.C. Sec. 423 (d)(1)(A) as
24 amended prior to January 1, 2005. However, any surviving spouse of a
25 person who was receiving an exemption at the time of the person's death
26 shall qualify if the surviving spouse is fifty-seven years of age or
27 older and otherwise meets the requirements of this section;

28 (4) The amount that the person shall be exempt from an obligation
29 to pay shall be calculated on the basis of combined disposable income,
30 as defined in RCW 84.36.383. If the person claiming the exemption was
31 retired for two months or more of the assessment year, the combined
32 disposable income of such person shall be calculated by multiplying the
33 average monthly combined disposable income of such person during the
34 months such person was retired by twelve. If the income of the person
35 claiming exemption is reduced for two or more months of the assessment
36 year by reason of the death of the person's spouse, or when other
37 substantial changes occur in disposable income that are likely to
38 continue for an indefinite period of time, the combined disposable

1 income of such person shall be calculated by multiplying the average
2 monthly combined disposable income of such person after such
3 occurrences by twelve. If it is necessary to estimate income to comply
4 with this subsection, the assessor may require confirming documentation
5 of such income prior to May 31 of the year following application;

6 (5)(a) A person who otherwise qualifies under this section and has
7 a combined disposable income of (~~(thirty-five)~~) forty thousand dollars
8 or less shall be exempt from all excess property taxes; and

9 (b)(i) A person who otherwise qualifies under this section and has
10 a combined disposable income of (~~(thirty)~~) thirty-five thousand dollars
11 or less but greater than (~~(twenty-five)~~) thirty thousand dollars shall
12 be exempt from all regular property taxes on the greater of fifty
13 thousand dollars or (~~(thirty-five)~~) fifty percent of the valuation of
14 his or her residence, but not to exceed (~~(seventy)~~) one hundred
15 thousand dollars of the valuation of his or her residence; or

16 (ii) A person who otherwise qualifies under this section and has a
17 combined disposable income of (~~(twenty-five)~~) thirty thousand dollars
18 or less shall be exempt from all regular property taxes on the greater
19 of sixty thousand dollars or sixty percent of the valuation of his or
20 her residence;

21 (6) For a person who otherwise qualifies under this section and has
22 a combined disposable income of (~~(thirty-five)~~) forty thousand dollars
23 or less, the valuation of the residence shall be the assessed value of
24 the residence on the later of January 1, 1995, or January 1st of the
25 assessment year the person first qualifies under this section. If the
26 person subsequently fails to qualify under this section only for one
27 year because of high income, this same valuation shall be used upon
28 requalification. If the person fails to qualify for more than one year
29 in succession because of high income or fails to qualify for any other
30 reason, the valuation upon requalification shall be the assessed value
31 on January 1st of the assessment year in which the person requalifies.
32 If the person transfers the exemption under this section to a different
33 residence, the valuation of the different residence shall be the
34 assessed value of the different residence on January 1st of the
35 assessment year in which the person transfers the exemption.

36 In no event may the valuation under this subsection be greater than
37 the true and fair value of the residence on January 1st of the
38 assessment year.

1 This subsection does not apply to subsequent improvements to the
2 property in the year in which the improvements are made. Subsequent
3 improvements to the property shall be added to the value otherwise
4 determined under this subsection at their true and fair value in the
5 year in which they are made.

6 **Sec. 2.** RCW 84.38.030 and 2006 c 62 s 3 are each amended to read
7 as follows:

8 A claimant may defer payment of special assessments and/or real
9 property taxes on up to eighty percent of the amount of the claimant's
10 equity value in the claimant's residence if the following conditions
11 are met:

12 (1) The claimant must meet all requirements for an exemption for
13 the residence under RCW 84.36.381, other than the age and income limits
14 under RCW 84.36.381.

15 (2) The claimant must be sixty years of age or older on December
16 31st of the year in which the deferral claim is filed, or must have
17 been, at the time of filing, retired from regular gainful employment by
18 reason of physical disability: PROVIDED, That any surviving spouse of
19 a person who was receiving a deferral at the time of the person's death
20 shall qualify if the surviving spouse is fifty-seven years of age or
21 older and otherwise meets the requirements of this section.

22 (3) The claimant must have a combined disposable income, as defined
23 in RCW 84.36.383, of (~~forty~~) fifty thousand dollars or less.

24 (4) The claimant must have owned, at the time of filing, the
25 residence on which the special assessment and/or real property taxes
26 have been imposed. For purposes of this subsection, a residence owned
27 by a marital community or owned by cotenants shall be deemed to be
28 owned by each spouse or cotenant. A claimant who has only a share
29 ownership in cooperative housing, a life estate, a lease for life, or
30 a revocable trust does not satisfy the ownership requirement.

31 (5) The claimant must have and keep in force fire and casualty
32 insurance in sufficient amount to protect the interest of the state in
33 the claimant's equity value: PROVIDED, That if the claimant fails to
34 keep fire and casualty insurance in force to the extent of the state's
35 interest in the claimant's equity value, the amount deferred shall not
36 exceed one hundred percent of the claimant's equity value in the land
37 or lot only.

1 (6) In the case of special assessment deferral, the claimant must
2 have opted for payment of such special assessments on the installment
3 method if such method was available.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act applies to taxes levied for
5 collection in 2009 and thereafter.

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