

APPEALING YOUR PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

The State of Michigan established the appeal process to assure the property tax system functions in an equitable fashion. It is the taxpayers right to take advantage of this process.

What is a valid basis for appeal?

Claiming your property taxes are too high and continue to go up is not a valid basis for appeal. The Taxable Value may increase each year based on the inflation rate multiplier or 1.05, whichever is less. To actually see a reduction in taxes, the Assessed Value (SEV) or Capped Value must decrease to less than the level of your current Taxable Value.

To have a good basis for appeal, you need to provide evidence which indicates the Assessed Value is in excess of 50% of True Cash Value. This requires some research on your part. Is the value of your property comparable to the sale price of similar properties that recently sold in your area? Is the information on which the Assessor based the assessment correct? You can visit the Assessor's Office to review your property record card for accuracy.

A number of factors are considered when estimating a property's value. Some of these factors are age, size, quality and type of construction, lot size, finished attics and basements, the neighborhood where the property is located, and the selling price of similar properties in that area.

If you recently purchased your home for less than the value placed on it by the Assessor, you need to check to see if other homes in your area also sold for less than twice the Assessed Value (SEV). This may indicate that the market value is lower than the value established by the Assessor. Information on sale prices of homes is available at the Assessor's Office.

A professional appraisal of your property can be valuable if you file an appeal; however, unless substantial tax savings result from the appeal, the cost of the appraisal might be more than your tax savings.

How do I appeal my property value?

The City of Sault Ste. Marie Board of Review meets starting the second Monday of March for a period of two (2) days and it's during this time that you must appeal your property value. The exact dates and time for the Board of Review will be listed on your Assessment Change Notice. Members of the Board of Review are citizens appointed by the City Commission and are not employees of the City of Sault Ste. Marie.

Notices of Assessment and Taxable Value are mailed to property owners at the end of February each year. Read your notice carefully and if you have questions, contact the Assessor's Office at 906-632-5712 or tfuller@saultcity.com

Appearances before the Board of Review are by appointment only and the appropriate appeal forms will be provided to you or may be found on-line at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/l4035f_2658_7.pdf. You will receive notification of the Board's decision regarding your appeal approximately four (4) weeks after the Board adjourns. This notification will provide you with information for further appeal to the Michigan Tax Tribunal (MTT) or a Tribunal property tax appeal form for valuations can be found online at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/taxtrib/scpetition_with_instructions_val_pov_with_multi_9_27_13_435472_7.pdf if you are not satisfied with the Board's decision. You must file your appeal with the MTT by July 31st for residential property or by May 31st for commercial real property, industrial real property and business personal property.

Residential properties are required to first protest before the local board of review in order to appeal to the Michigan Tax Tribunal.