

PIATT COUNTY BOARD OF REVIEW RULES & PROCEDURES

1. SUGGESTION. It is strongly recommended that the tax payer discuss his or her assessment with their township assessor prior to filing a complaint with the Board of Review. If after talking with the Township Assessor, the taxpayer still wishes to pursue a formal complaint with the Board of Review, he or she needs to familiarize themselves with the rules governing hearings before the Piatt County Board of Review. The thirty (30) day time limit for filing a complaint from the date of publication will not be changed to allow additional time for discussing an assessment with the taxpayer's Township Assessor.

2. BASIS OF COMPLAINT. Property tax law in the State of Illinois requires that all non-farm property be assessed at 33 1/3% of fair market value and that like property be assessed in a like manner (equity). All farm land assessments are based on total agricultural use value as determined by the State Farmland Assessment Review Committee rather than fair market value. The Piatt County Board of Review will review complaints of assessed values on farm residences, farm home site and farm buildings. The Board of Review does not have the authority to adjust the certified farmland equalized assessed values received annually from the Illinois Department of Revenue pursuant to the Farmland Assessment Law.

A formal complaint may be filed when it appears that:

- A. The Township Assessors market value is higher than actual market value.
- B. The assessment is higher than those of similar neighboring properties.
- C. The assessment is based on inaccurate information.
- D. The assessed value is at a higher percentage of market value for the property than the prevailing township or county median level, as shown in an assessment/sales ratio study.

3. TIME FOR FILING COMPLAINT. All complaints must be filed with the Board of Review on or before thirty (30) days after publication of the township assessment roll in the local newspaper. The following rules apply to filing of such Complaint:

- A. After thirty (30) days from the date of publication the Board of Review will not accept any requests for a hearing on a Complaint.
- B. Mailings to the Board of Review postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service are considered filed on the date postmarked.
- C. Metered mail must also bear the official U.S. Postal Service date stamp, if it arrives after the final filing date.

D. All other mailings and hand deliveries will be marked as of the date received in the office of the Board of Review.

E. The Board of Review will not accept faxed or emailed Complaints.

F. The office hours for the Board of Review are Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. The Board of Review is closed on Saturdays, Sundays, and all County holidays.

4. PROCEDURES FOR FILING A COMPLAINT.

A. All complaints relating to real estate assessments must be filed on forms provided by the Board of Review. This form is available at the office of Supervisor of Assessments. The form is also available online at www.piattcounty.org.

A separate Complaint form must be filed for each parcel number. All evidence or additional information to be considered must be submitted with the Complaint form.

B. Complaint forms must be signed by the complainant taxpayer, or one of the following representatives on behalf of the complainant taxpayer: the taxpayer's legal counsel; the taxpayer's power of attorney; a relative of the taxpayer. Any individual who signs a complaint form on behalf of the complainant taxpayer must have authorization by an owner of record; this authorization must be attached to the original complaint form.

C. If a Complaint deals with land and the buildings on one parcel number as separate issues, they are still to be filed on one complaint form. The tax payer should be aware that even if his or her complaint is only on either the land or the buildings on the said parcel, the Board of Review will review the entire parcel, not just the part to which the taxpayer objects.

D. Complaints filed by two separate persons as to one property will not be heard separately.

E. If the property is income producing, the tax payer must furnish the income and expense statements for the three prior years as to the said property for evidence of value to the Board of Review with the Complaint form. The most appropriate evidence in this regard is the pertinent schedules of the taxpayer's federal income tax return.

F. If a taxpayer requests a reduction in the assessed evaluation of \$100,000.00 or more, it is required that the Board of Review Office notify each

taxing district effected by the Complaint. **EACH TAXPAYER IN THIS SITUATION IS REQUIRED TO SUPPLY THEIR ESTIMATE OF CORRECT VALUE ON THE COMPLAINT FORM.**

G. Any tax body who wishes to intervene in a matter already before the Board must file a Request to Intervene. Such filing must be made within 10 days of the post marked date appearing on the Notice which is furnished to the taxing districts in which the subject property is located. In instances where a taxing district has filed as an intervener concerning a matter before the Board, in accordance with statute, such district has no more than 14 days after the aforementioned post mark to furnish the Board with evidence supporting their opinion of value

Incomplete complaint forms will be returned to the property owner, regardless of who submitted the complaint form. Complaints that have been returned may be resubmitted to the Board, but will not be accepted after the 30 day appeal time. Any complaint form that lacks sufficient evidence to identify the property in question; unsigned forms by property owner or taxpayer; or a form that is signed by an agent but is not accompanied by a letter of authorization signed by the property owner; or a form that is not completely filled out may be returned by the Board of Review to be completed by the filing deadline. If an incomplete form is received during the end of the appeal period; the Board will grant an extension in writing to complete and return the form to the Board of Review.

5. **SUPPORTING EVIDENCE.**

IN THE EVENT THE CONTESTING PARTY IS UNABLE TO SUBMIT WRITTEN OR DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE WITH THE COMPLAINT FORM, HE OR SHE MUST SUBMIT A LETTER REQUESTING AN EXTENSION OF TIME WITH THE COMPLAINT FORM. WITHOUT THE WRITTEN REQUEST FOR AN EXTENSION, NO EVIDENCE WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE COMPLAINT FORM IS FILED. AT THE TIME THE REQUEST IS RECEIVED, THE BOARD OF REVIEW MAY GRANT UP TO A FIFTEEN (15) DAY EXTENSION FOR GOOD CAUSE. GOOD CAUSE MAY INCLUDE, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, THE INABILITY TO SUBMIT EVIDENCE FOR A CAUSE BEYOND THE CONTROL OF THE CONTESTING PARTY (SUCH AS COMPLETION OF A CONTRACTED APPRAISAL, OR THE DEATH OR ILLNESS OF THE TAXPAYER).

Examples of evidence include but are not limited to the following:

A. Settlement Statements, Sales Contracts, and/or Illinois Real Estate Declaration Forms. These documents are most helpful on a recently purchased property. They must be signed by both the buyer and seller, and the total sales price must be stated. All such transactions must be an arms length sale to be considered market value.

B. Comparable Sales. If there are sales of similar properties in the same neighborhood, evidence of these sale prices should be submitted. "Similar" means for example, the square footage is approximately the same. All square footage is determined by outside measurements.

C. Comparable Assessment. If there are similar properties in the same neighborhood that have been assessed lower, the evidence should include assessed valuations, addresses, and property index numbers. If a comparison of similar properties is used to claim a lack of equal treatment (equity), these comparisons should be included in the original Complaint as evidence of the lack equal treatment. They should be similar in type use, size, quality, age, construction, location and market value as of January 1 of the assessment year.

D. Photographs. These can be helpful in showing the style, condition, and any special factors of the taxpayer's property that should be brought to the Boards attention. Photographs of other similar properties may also be helpful for purposes of comparison.

E. Appraisal or Legal Brief. A current appraisal by a qualified appraiser can be most helpful. It must conform to the uniform standards of professional appraisal practice (USPAP) to be considered. In addition, the taxpayer's representative may file a legal brief in support of the taxpayer's Complaint.

F. Commercial property shall be defined as income producing, non-farm property. Residential property consisting of more than three rental units shall be considered commercial property. Evidence of fair market value (appraisal) is required for commercial and industrial property with an estimated value of \$300,000.00 or more.

6. PROCEDURES OF THE BOARD OF REVIEW.

A. The Board will assign a docket number upon receipt of a properly completed Complaint form filed by a taxpayer.

B. The Board of Review will review all Complaints and may elect to render a tentative decision. Such decision will be mailed to the taxpayer. If the tentative decision is deemed unsatisfactory by the taxpayer, the taxpayer must request a hearing within ten (10) days of the post marked date of the Notice from the

Board of Review. If the taxpayer fails to appear for a scheduled hearing, the tentative decision will become final.

C. The taxpayer will be notified by phone call or mail of the date and time of the scheduled hearing.

D. If the taxpayer or their representative cannot appear at a scheduled hearing, the Clerk of the Board of Review must be notified at least forty-eight (48) hours before the scheduled hearing. Continuances will only be granted according to the operating needs of the Board of Review.

E. Failure to submit evidence or attend the scheduled hearing may result in dismissal of the appeal.

F. The Board of Review requires all taxpayers or their representatives to be present in person at a hearing when they request a reduction in an assessed valuation of \$100,000.00 or more.

G. The Board of Review will process Complaints by township, examine evidence of market value and render a decision. The latest ascertainable level of assessment for each township will be applied to the fair market value in determining the assessment. When a Complaint is filed, the taxpayer should be aware that the Board of Review may lower or raise all or any part of the assessment on the property.

H. A taxpayer may appear and represent him or herself, or be represented by his or her immediate family, an officer of a corporation owning a property, a licensed attorney, or other person who has a written authorization from the property owner.

7. HEARINGS BY THE BOARD OF REVIEW.

A. All hearings will be conducted in the Board of Review office located at the Piatt County Courthouse, 101W.Washington, Monticello, Illinois.

B. The Township Assessor or a representative from that office may present evidence concerning a property and its assessment.

C. Whenever a taxpayer is requesting a reduction in an assessed valuation of \$100,000.00 or more, the taxing districts affected by this request and or their attorney will be notified and may appear at the hearing with questions. Additional time may be set aside for more complex properties.

D. The Piatt County Board of Review should not be bypassed by a taxpayer or taxpayer representative who either sends a letter, faxes or telephones the day of the hearing indicating that their evidence is not ready and causes the Board to make a decision without all the evidence. This will not constitute an excuse for a Complaint filed by the taxpayer with the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board.

E. **The Board of Review may, upon its own motion, increase, decrease or correct an assessment or change the class or property or add omitted to the tax rolls.** When the Board of Review proposes such assessment change it shall notify the owner of record and the Township Assessor by mail. If either desires a hearing, a request for that hearing must be made within ten (10) days of the postmark on the said assessment notice.

F. The Board of Review does not issue its decision at this hearing. The Board of Review will mail its decision to the taxpayer upon reaching its decision as to the taxpayer's complaint.

8. EXEMPTIONS. Claims for new non-homestead exemptions on any real property must be filed in duplicate with the Board of Review by December 31st. The request for exemption shall be filed on a properly completed exemption form providing all the information required.

9. EQUALIZATION. The Board of Review shall act as an equalization authority by applying multipliers, which lower or raise assessments on non-farm properties within each township to attain uniformity in assessments.

10. BOARD OF REVIEW OFFICE.

A. The Board of Review shall keep a record of all proceedings, requests, decisions and actions which come before the Board of Review.

B. These rules do not constitute the entire duties and responsibilities of the Board of Review, and may be changed by publication of any such amendments.