



As your Broward County Property Appraiser, it is my goal to continually educate and inform residents about relevant issues affecting homeowners. Homestead Exemption saves the average homeowner approximately \$1,000 per year in actual taxes. This valuable exemption automatically renews each year unless there is a change of ownership or eligible use of the property. For full information on exemptions please visit our website at www.bcpa.net or call us at (954)357-6904

On Death and Taxes

Sadly, after the loss of a loved one who was Homesteaded, the law considers the passing of the owner as a change of ownership. A surviving resident must not benefit from the Homestead tax status of the departed but must update the change in ownership status. A change in ownership, like the passing of one of the owners, can impact the status of the Homestead Exemption. Florida law requires that the Property Appraiser be informed of any change of property use or ownership status.

If anyone named on the Homestead Exemption has died, you must report it to our office to avoid potential penalties. The Homestead Exemption of a deceased person must be removed in the year immediately following the individual's passing. Unfortunately, Homestead Exemptions do not transfer to family members and do not remain with the property after the Homesteaded owner passes away.

If you are a co-owner and sole beneficiary to the property in the will, you may apply for Homestead Exemption



while the will is probated as long as the property is your permanent residence.

As discussed in our last e-newsletter, not reporting a change of ownership, passing of a Homesteaded owner or Homesteaded trust beneficiary, and divorce or separation may result in a costly back tax lien, plus penalties and interest, for continuing to improperly receive the benefits of the expired exemption. State law allows for a back tax for as many as ten years, plus payment of substantial penalty and annual interest (50% of the unpaid taxes for each year and interest at a rate of 15% per year).

To ensure property owners continue to receive their tax-saving exemption and do not overlook reporting a change, our office mails a Homestead Renewal Notice and "Change Card" to all Homesteaded properties in January. This card allows property owners to verify that the status, use, and ownership of the property has not changed. If there has been no change, the property owner does not need to do anything and can simply keep the notice as proof of their exemption renewal.

If you are a surviving spouse or otherwise believe you are entitled to an exemption, you must file your own Homestead Exemption application to receive the benefit.

If my office can be of assistance to you with Homestead Exemption or other available exemptions, please visit our website at www.bcpa.net or contact our Customer Service Department at (954)357-6830.

Take care,

Marty Kiar, Broward County Property Appraiser