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DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY
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Bulletin 14 of 2019
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Procedural Changes for 2020

TO: Assessing Officers and County Equalization Directors
FROM: State Tax Commission
SUBJECT: Procedural Changes for the 2020 Assessment Year

The purpose of this Bulletin to provide information on statutory changes, procedural changes and reminders for the 2020 assessment year.

A. Inflation Rate Used in the 2020 Capped Value Formula

The inflation rate, expressed as a multiplier, to be used in the 2020 Capped Value Formula is 1.019.

The 2020 Capped Value Formula is as follows:

$$\text{2020 CAPPED VALUE} = (\text{2019 Taxable Value} - \text{LOSSES}) \times 1.019 + \text{ADDITIONS}$$

The formula above does not include 1.05 because the inflation rate multiplier of 1.019 is lower than 1.05.

B. Federal Poverty Guidelines Used in the Determination of Poverty Exemptions for 2020

MCL 211.7u, which deals with poverty exemptions, was significantly altered by PA 390 of 1994 and was further amended by PA 620 of 2002.

Local governing bodies are required to adopt guidelines that set income levels for their poverty exemption guidelines and those income levels **shall not be set lower** by a city or township than the federal poverty guidelines updated annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This means, for example, that the income level for a household of 3 persons **shall not** be set lower than \$21,330 which is the amount shown on the following chart for a family of 3 persons. The income level for a family of 3 persons may be set higher than \$21,330. Following are the federal poverty guidelines for use in setting poverty exemption guidelines for 2020 assessments:

Size of Family Unit	Poverty Guidelines
1	\$12,490
2	\$16,910
3	\$21,330
4	\$25,750
5	\$30,170
6	\$34,590
7	\$39,010
8	\$43,430
For each additional person	\$4,420

Note: PA 390 of 1994 states that the poverty exemption guidelines established by the governing body of the local assessing unit shall also include an asset level test. An asset test means the amount of cash, fixed assets or other property that could be used, or converted to cash for use in the payment of property taxes. The asset test should calculate a maximum amount permitted and all other assets above that amount should be considered as available. Please see STC Bulletin 6 of 2017 for more information on poverty exemptions.

Note: P.A. 135 of 2012 changed the requirements for filing documentation in support of a poverty exemption to allow an affidavit (Treasury Form 4988) to be filed for all persons residing in the residence who were not required to file federal or state income tax returns in the current year or in the immediately preceding year. This does include the owner of the property who is filing for the exemption.

C. Sales Studies

Equalization study dates are as follows for 2020 equalization:

Two Year Study: April 1, two years prior through March 31, current year

Single Year Study: October 1, preceding year through September 30, current year

For 2019 studies for 2020 equalization the dates are as follows:

Two Year Study: April 1, 2017 through March 31, 2019

Single Year Study: October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019

Note that the time period revisions apply to all equalization studies, that is: sales ratio studies, land value studies and economic condition factor studies for appraisals. Also note that the revised time period for two year studies applies to all real property classifications.

Please be advised that the above sale study dates **are not** the same as the valuation date used in appeals before the Michigan Tax Tribunal. Evidence presented in a Tax Tribunal appeal should reflect the value of the property as of tax day (December 31). This means that sales occurring *after* March 31, 2019 and September 30, 2019 should still be considered and included when submitting evidence in a Tax Tribunal appeal involving the 2019 tax year.

D. Property Classification

The State Tax Commission reminds assessors that classification is to be determined annually and is based upon the use of the property and not highest and best use of the property. The