

Homestead/Farmstead Rebate:

Property Tax Relief

The Taxpayer Relief Act, Act 1 of Special Session 1 of 2006, was signed into law by Governor Rendell on June 27, 2006. The Taxpayer Relief Act provides for property tax reduction allocations to be distributed by the Commonwealth to each school district. Property tax reduction will be through a "homestead or farmstead exclusion."

Homestead or Farmstead Exclusion. Under a homestead or farmstead property tax exclusion, the assessed value of each homestead or farmstead is reduced by the same amount before the property tax is computed. Homeowners are not guaranteed a homestead or farmstead exclusion unless sufficient funds have been collected to permit property tax reduction allocations to be made by the Commonwealth.

Filing Deadline. The application is processed and approved by the County Homestead Office. Once an application is approved as a homestead/farmstead the owner is eligible for the tax relief and will not have to file again unless circumstances change regarding the property. Each year prior to December 31st individuals who do not have an approved application on file as well as individuals who acquired property within the school district during the year will be sent an application for completion. The filing deadline with the Assessment Office is March 1 of each year. It is important to complete and file the application by the March 1st due date, because if the deadline is missed the taxpayer will miss their eligibility to receive tax relief which may occur on the July 1st real estate tax bill.

Homeowners should contact the School District Business office for a copy of the county's homestead and farmstead application form. The forms for the new school year will not be available to after December 31st of each year. Once the form is completed the Assessment Office will approve or deny the application and send notice to the home owner.

[More information on the Taxpayer Relief Act can be found on the Department of Education's Web site, \(www.pde.state.pa.us\).](http://www.pde.state.pa.us)