



THE CITY OF YORK, PENNSYLVANIA

Residential Tax Abatement Program (RETAP)

Michael R. Helfrich, Mayor

The City of York, in collaboration with the County of York and the York City School District, offers a tax abatement incentive to encourage major improvements, rehabilitation and new construction of houses, condominiums and apartments in the City of York.

The program provides for tax abatements on the increased assessed value of properties over a ten-year period. The City currently offers a 100% abatement while the York City School District and York County offer a phase-out exemption – 100% in year one, 90% in year two, and so forth until a 10% abatement is offered in year ten. Abatements run with the parcel so subsequent owners within the ten-year period also benefit from the tax savings. Abatements run with the fiscal year of the taxing entity – January through December for the City and County, and July through June for the School District.

Year	Abatement		
One	100%	Six	50%
Two	90%	Seven	40%
Three	80%	Eight	30%
Four	70%	Nine	20%
Five	60%	Ten	10%
		Eleven	0%

Individuals desiring to participate in the program must carefully follow the guidelines step by step:

- (1) First, the applicant must accept the initial assessed value of the property as determined by the York County Assessment Office. If applicant feels the initial assessed value is too high, an appeal may be filed with the Assessment Appeals Board prior to the start of improvements. The time required for the appeal process can vary considerably depending on the filing date and the timing in the appeal season. Work done prior to finalizing an initial value with the Assessment Office will not be eligible for an abatement.
- (2) The applicant must deliver a copy of the completed application, assessment notice and supporting documents to the York City Office of Permits, Planning & Zoning.
- (3) Applicants desiring a preliminary review and approval of the proposed project should make a written request to the York City Director of Community & Economic Development on the same day the completed application and supporting documents are submitted to Permits, Planning & Zoning. Preliminary review and approval by the City will be completed and results communicated to the applicant in writing within 10 business days of submission. Should additional information or planning documents be required before a preliminary approval is granted, additional time will be required to issue the preliminary approval. Once approved by the City, the applicant should immediately seek preliminary approval from the County and the School District.
- (4) The applicant must obtain necessary permits from the York City Office of Permits, Planning & Zoning. Applicants may apply for building permits before completing the application but must not pick up their permits until after completing Step 2 or, if desired, Step 3. Issuing of permits may require up to 30 days for a residential property with multiple units and up to 15 days for a residential property with a single unit. In some instances, a Plan Review may be required by the City prior to the issuing of permits.

(5) The applicant must deliver copies of the application, assessment notice, permits and preliminary review to the York City Treasurer and the York County Assessment Office. Work on the project may now begin.

(6) Once all construction and improvements are completed, applicant must schedule an inspection by the York City Building Inspector, who will issue a Certificate of Occupancy.

(7) Applicant must then contact the York County Assessment Office for a reassessment of the property. The time required for the reassessment process after construction is complete will depend on the Assessment Office schedule of reassessments throughout the County. Once your Notice of Change in Assessment is received, deliver a copy to the York City Treasurer's Office and the York City Department of Community & Economic Development.

If you feel your new assessed value is too high, you may appeal the assessment to the Assessment Appeals Board. The time required for the Appeals Board process will vary considerably depending on the filing date and the timing in the appeal season. Should the Assessment Appeals Board modify your property's assessed value, you will receive an updated Notice of Change in Assessment from the Assessment Office. As a final resort, you may appeal to the Court of Common Pleas; however, be aware that the appeal may take several years. The Court will issue a Court Stipulation summarizing their decision. You must deliver copies of the document setting your final assessed value (either the Notice of Change in Assessment or the Court Stipulation) to the York City Department of Community & Economic Development, the York City Treasurer's Office and the York County Assessment Office. Remember that the appeal process can result in an increase in assessed value as well as a decrease. Tax bills issued during the appeal process should be paid when received. A revised bill or refund will be issued should the taxes be reduced as a result of the appeal process. Initiating an assessment appeal will not delay approval of your participation in the RETAP.

(8) At this point, each taxing entity will independently make a decision as to whether or not the applicant has met the final requirements. If the applicant has followed the guidelines and completed the project as outlined in the application and supporting documents, the taxing entity will issue a written final approval granting an abatement from real estate taxes under their purview. Final decisions on City and County abatements will be made by January 1 and on School abatements by June 10. Each entity will determine their own abatement schedule. All requests and documentation in support of your application for an abatement must be received by the taxing entities no later than December 1 for the City and County and June 1 for the School District.

(9) Abatements always run in tandem with the applicable tax year – January 1 through December 31 for the City and County and July 1 through June 30 for the School District.

(a) If you completed the final step of the application process before the December 1 or June 1 deadline, your abatement will begin at the beginning of the upcoming tax year for that entity. The period of the abatement will extend for ten tax years from the beginning of the applicable tax year.

(b) If you completed the final step of the application process after the December 1 or June 1 deadline, you may opt to begin your abatement for that taxing entity beginning the first day of the month following the date of your final approval letter; however, you remain responsible for the full amount of the real estate taxes until the month your abatement becomes effective. No matter how many months remain in the applicable tax year, this tax year will be considered a full year and the first year of the ten-year abatement period.

There are City and County Ordinances that are applicable to the RETAP. The York City Ordinance is accessible on the York City Website under Government -> City Council -> Codified Ordinances -> Article 307: Incentive Programs for Dwelling Improvements. The York County Ordinance is accessible on the York County Website under County Administration -> Commissioner's Office -> Ordinances -> 2011-05.

If you have questions concerning this procedure, contact Joe Jefcoat in the York City Treasurer's Office. If you have questions about the eligibility of your project, contact Philip Given (717-849-2875) or Blanda Nace (717-849-2876) in the York City Department of Community & Economic Development.