



ANSWERS TO THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BASIC & ENHANCED STAR (School Tax Relief) PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

1. WHAT IS STAR?

STAR is a New York State tax relief program that lowers property taxes for owner-occupied primary residences. There are two levels of STAR benefits – Basic STAR and Enhanced STAR.

2. WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR STAR?

To be eligible for the STAR reduction, you must own a property that you use as your primary residence (see question number 3). For Basic STAR, this is the only requirement. Basic STAR has no income or age limits. To be eligible for Enhanced STAR, you must own a property that you use as your primary residence and be 65 or older. In addition, the total annual income of all the owners of the property must be \$74,700 or less.

3. WHAT IS A “PRIMARY RESIDENCE”?

Your primary residence is typically the home that you occupy for most of the year and is generally the place where you vote and where your car is registered. If you own more than one property, only your primary residence can receive a STAR tax reduction. STAR applicants may be asked to prove “primary residency” and, in the future, certify that the property is still the primary place where they reside.

4. CAN I HAVE STAR BENEFITS FOR MORE THAN ONE HOME?

No. Only one home can be your primary residence.

5. DO ALL THE OWNERS OF A PROPERTY HAVE TO USE THE PROPERTY AS THEIR PRIMARY RESIDENCE TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR STAR?

No. You must list all of the owners on the application, but only one of the owners has to use the property as his or her primary residence to qualify for benefits.

6. HOW MUCH LESS PROPERTY TAX WILL I PAY IF I HAVE THE STAR REDUCTION?

The level of the STAR benefit is set every year by the State, based on the type of property you own. For example, each tax year from July 1st - June 30th, owners of Class 1 properties (that is 1-, 2-, and 3-family homes and some condominiums) can save approximately \$200 in property taxes if they had the Basic STAR reduction and about \$380 if they had the Enhanced STAR reduction. The benefit depends on the level set by the State.

This document is intended to serve only as a guide.

All submitted applications for exemptions are subject to review in accordance with the real property tax laws of New York State.

7. HOW DO I APPLY FOR STAR?

You can print a Basic or Enhanced STAR application from the Department of Finance website at nyc.gov/STAR. If you do not have Internet access, call 311 to request an application by mail.

Before applying, Finance suggests that you check your assessment records online to make sure that you do not already have the STAR tax reduction. A surprising 50-60% of STAR applicants already have the STAR reduction. Visit nyc.gov/soa to look up your latest Statement of Account to see if you have any exemptions. Or call 311, and ask them to look it up for you.

8. WHAT IS THE DEADLINE TO APPLY? WHEN WILL MY TAXES BE REDUCED?

Basic and Enhanced STAR applications must be filed by March 15th. Applications that are received by that date (or the next business day) and approved will result in lower property taxes beginning July 1st of the next tax year.

Owners of co-ops also receive the tax reduction beginning on July 1st. However, management offices receive a report from Finance each November breaking down the total exemptions by apartment/unit. For this reason, co-op management cannot refund the tax reduction to individual co-op owners until November, at the earliest. It is left to the discretion of the management company how to pass along the tax savings to individual shareholders.

9. DO I NEED TO REAPPLY EVERY YEAR?

- Basic STAR: No. Once you are approved for STAR, you do not have to reapply unless you move to a new primary residence. However, if you have Basic STAR and are turning 65, you have to complete a separate application for Enhanced STAR.
- Enhanced STAR: No. Recipients of Enhanced STAR do not have to reapply and are not currently required to provide an Annual Income Statement.

Mail completed applications by March 15th

(if deadline falls on a weekend, due date is the next business day) to:

NYC Dept. of Finance, STAR Exemption, PO Box 3120, Church St. Station, NYC 10008-3120.

Keep a copy of your application for your records.