
ASSESSOR'S OFFICE: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

2026 ASSESSMENT YEAR

1. What is Assessed Value?

Assessed Value is the estimated property value determined by the assessor as of **Tax Day**. For 2026, **Tax Day** is **December 31, 2025**. This value is subject to appeal at the **March Board of Review**.

2. What is State Equalized Value (SEV)?

After all appeals are heard, the **March Board of Review** confirms the assessment roll. The roll is then reviewed by the county and state. Following these reviews, **State Equalized Value (SEV)** is set, representing **50% of Market Value (True Cash Value) as of Tax Day**.

3. What is the formula for Capped Value?

The **Capped Value** formula is used to calculate the current year's **Taxable Value**:

2025 Taxable Value – (Losses) × 2026 CPI (2.7%) + (Additions) = 2026 Taxable Value

4. What is Taxable Value?

Taxable Value (TV) is the lesser of **Assessed Value** and **Capped Value**. In the year following a **transfer of ownership**, the **Taxable Value** will equal the **Assessed Value**. In Michigan, **property taxes are based on Taxable Value, not SEV**. Taxable Value can never exceed Assessed Value.

5. Why aren't my Assessed and Taxable Values equal?

For most properties, market values are increasing. The state constitution requires properties to be **assessed at 50% of market value**, but **Taxable Value increases are limited** to the **statewide inflation rate (CPI)**, which for 2026 is **1.027 (2.7%)**.

For example, if your neighborhood's market values increase by 10%, your Taxable Value will still only increase by **2.7%** due to this cap.

6. Why isn't my new assessment 50% of my purchase price?

By law, **purchase price alone cannot determine Assessed Value**. **MCL 211.27** states that purchase price is **not the presumptive True Cash Value** of a property. Instead, Michigan assessors analyze **market sales transactions** to determine **Assessed Value (AV)**.

Market value is defined as the **most probable price** a property would sell for under normal conditions, where both the buyer and seller are knowledgeable and acting voluntarily.

7. What is the time period for the 2025 sales study?

The **State Tax Commission** requires counties to perform a **12-month and 24-month sales study** to determine property values. The study that **benefits taxpayers the most** is used.

For **2026 assessments**, **Washtenaw County Equalization** utilized a **24-month sales study** covering **April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2025**. This longer study period helps taxpayers by incorporating older sales.

8. When can I appeal my assessment?

By law, property owners may only appeal their assessment at the **2026 March Board of Review**.

- The **Notice of Assessment** will list available **appointment dates and times**.
- Appeal petitions will be available **online** and at the **Assessing Department counter**.
- **Letter appeals** may be submitted by the stated deadline.

9. What if I disagree with the March Board of Review decision?

If you disagree with the **March Board of Review** decision, you may appeal to the **Michigan Tax Tribunal**:

- **Residential property appeals** must be filed by **July 31, 2026**, after a March Board of Review appeal. Forms are available at michigan.gov/taxtrib.
- **Commercial and Industrial properties** may file directly with the **Michigan Tax Tribunal** by **May 31, 2026**, without first appealing to the **Board of Review**.

10. Why can't I protest my taxes when I receive my tax bill in July?

State law allows only **one opportunity per year** to appeal property values—**at the March Board of Review**. You **cannot** protest your taxes when receiving a tax bill.

11. Can I apply for tax relief due to financial hardship?

Yes, you may apply for a **Poverty Exemption**, which is based on income eligibility using the **2026 Poverty Income Guidelines**.

- Applications are available at the **Assessor's Office** or on the city website.

- All **required documentation** must be submitted.
- You may apply at the **March, July, or December Board of Review meetings**.
- This exemption **may not reduce taxes to zero**, depending on local government guidelines.

For more details, contact the **Assessor's Office**.

12. Is property assessment information available online?

Yes, you can look up property information by **name, address, or parcel number** at:

www.cityofypsilanti.com →Your Government →Departments →Assessing

13. Why is my neighbor paying less in property taxes than I am?

In **1994**, Michigan voters approved **Proposal A**, which changed how property taxes are calculated:

- Before **Proposal A**, taxes were based on **SEV (State Equalized Value)**.
- After **Proposal A**, taxes are based on **Taxable Value (TV)**.
- **Taxable Value increases are capped** at the **rate of inflation (CPI) or 5%**, whichever is lower.

However, when a property is **sold**, its **Taxable Value is uncapped** in the following year, resetting it to **SEV**.

For example:

- A neighbor **purchases a home on March 20, 2025**.
- Their **2025 SEV = \$50,000** and **Taxable Value = \$35,000**.
- Their **2025 tax bill** is based on the prior owner's **\$35,000 TV**.
- In **2026**, the property is **uncapped**, and their **Taxable Value resets to SEV (\$60,000)**, meaning their **2026 tax bill** is based on **\$60,000 TV**.

Because of **Proposal A**, you **cannot compare property taxes with neighbors**, but you **can compare SEV**—keeping in mind differences in **square footage, number of bathrooms, lot size, and other features**.

14. How are property taxes calculated?

Property Taxes = (Taxable Value ÷ 1,000) × Local Millage Rate

For example, if your **Taxable Value = \$100,000** and your **Local Millage Rate = 40 mills**:
 $(\$100,000 \div 1,000) \times 40 = \$4,000$ in property taxes