

# THE PROPERTY ASSESSMENT CYCLE

**SCHOOLS**  
Boards of Education

**CITIES**  
City Councils

**COUNTY**  
Boards of Supervisors

**TOWNSHIPS**  
Township Trustees

**OTHER ENTITIES**  
Miscellaneous

Each of these tax levying bodies prepares and adopts a **BUDGET**, following a public hearing. These go to the

The **ASSESSOR** lists and values all taxable property in the jurisdiction and prepares

**ASSESSMENT BOOKS** and delivers them to the

**COUNTY AUDITOR**, who determines each taxpayer's share of the total budget by applying the rollback percentages to each property class as determined by the Director of Revenue, and any exemptions. This is delivered to the

**COUNTY TREASURER**, who prepares individual tax statements and delivers them to

**INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT STATEMENTS** and delivers them by April 1 to

**TAXPAYERS** who pay their taxes to the

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Assessed value and taxable value are not synonymous terms.
- Property is assessed as of January 1.
- Property is reassessed every two years.
- The levy rate and the amount of tax for each parcel are calculated by the Auditor after applying a rollback percentage to the assessed value and deducting for any credits and exemptions. The rollback percentages can change each year.

## EXAMPLE:

\$150,000	Assessed Value (residential class)
x .569180	Rollback Percentage (2018)
\$85,377	Rollback Value (taxable)
- \$1,852	Military Exemption (if applicable)
= \$83,525	Net Taxable Value
x .03908999	Levy \$39.08999 per thousand (varies with taxing district)
<b>\$3,264.99</b>	
- \$189.59	<b>Homestead Credit</b> ((4,850 x levy) x 100%) (level of funding)
<b>\$3,076</b>	<b>Property Tax</b> (rounded to nearest even dollar)

## QUESTIONS?

For more details, visit [www.iowa-assessors.org](http://www.iowa-assessors.org).  
Please contact the Assessor's office in your local jurisdiction for questions related to property values. Contact your local County Treasurer for questions about taxes.



## UNDERSTANDING YOUR PROPERTY'S ASSESSMENT

When it comes to your property's assessment, you'll benefit by understanding a few key aspects of the process, which we've highlighted in this brochure.



## WHAT DO ASSESSORS DO?

Assessors determine the value of all real property within their jurisdictions in the following classes:

- Residential
- Multi-Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Agricultural

They complete assessments every year with an effective date of January 1. Every odd-numbered year is considered a reassessment year. In the case of new construction or improvements, this may involve assessing the partial value of a property.



## DOES THE ASSESSOR HANDLE TAXES?

It's a common misperception that the Assessor determines tax rates, calculates taxes, and/or collects taxes. But the Assessor solely focuses on property value.

Taxing bodies such as schools, cities, townships, etc., adopt budgets that determine the tax rate needed to meet these overall budgets.

Your taxes are in proportion to the value of your property compared to the total value of the taxing district where your property is located.

## YOU MAY QUALIFY FOR EXEMPTIONS AND CREDITS

You may be eligible for certain exemptions or credits available under Iowa law, including, but not limited to, the:

- Homestead credit
- Disabled veteran's homestead credit
- Military exemption, and
- Business property tax credit

Visit [www.iowa-assessors.org](http://www.iowa-assessors.org) for additional exemptions/credits. Each property owner is responsible to apply for the appropriate credits/exemptions. Check with your Assessor's office for more details about the requirements for filing.

## HOW ARE ASSESSMENTS DETERMINED?

Your assessment is based on the market value of your property, or an estimate of what it would sell for on the open market as of January 1 the year of your assessment.

### The Assessor May Use One or More Methods:

- 1. Market Approach** — Typically used for residential properties, this involves finding comparable properties that have sold recently and taking into account sales ratio studies to determine the general level of assessment in a community.
- 2. Cost Approach** — This is an estimate of the cost of labor/materials that it would take to replace your property with a similar one, plus the value of any land.
- 3. Income Approach** — Commonly used for properties that produce income, e.g. apartment or office buildings. The Assessor asks what another investor would pay for a property to gain its income. This is the most complex of the three methods because of the research, information, and analysis needed for an accurate estimate. It requires a thorough knowledge of local and national financial conditions and development trends in the area of the property.

## WHAT CAUSES MY PROPERTY'S VALUE TO CHANGE?

Your property's value can change for a variety of reasons. When assessors revalue properties, they take into account various research, sales ratio studies, and local and economic conditions, all of which can result in a change.

## WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH MY PROPERTY'S ASSESSMENT?

If you disagree with your property's assessment, start by asking yourself two questions:

- 1.** What is the actual market value of my property?
- 2.** How does this value compare to similar properties in the neighborhood?

If you have questions after answering these questions, we encourage you to contact your Assessor to discuss them.

If you decide to file an official protest, you can file a written protest with the Board of Review. The Board includes three to five members from various areas of the assessing jurisdiction. It operates independently of the Assessor's office, and can confirm the assessment, or adjust it upward or downward.

If you're not satisfied with the Board's decision, you may file an appeal with the Property Assessment Appeal Board or District Court within 20 days after the Board of Review's adjournment, or May 31, whichever is later.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ASSESSED VALUE AND THE TAXABLE VALUE OF MY PROPERTY?

The Assessor determines the assessed value of your property, but the taxable value is determined by the Auditor after applying state-ordered rollback percentages for various property classes. Rollbacks are designed to help reduce property tax valuations according to assessment limitations — cushioning the impact of inflation.



## KEY DATES TO REMEMBER

<b>January 1</b>	Effective date of current assessment
<b>April 2–25</b>	Property owners may request an informal review of their assessment
<b>April 2–30</b>	Period for filing assessment protests with local Board of Review
<b>May 1–Adjournment</b>	Board of Review meets
<b>October 9–31</b>	Protest period to file with Board of Review for properties affected by changes in value as a result of a Department of Revenue equalization order
<b>January 1–December 31</b>	Period for filing for exemptions and credits. If the home qualifies and you file for a homestead credit before July 1, the credit will take effect for the current assessment year. If not, it will take effect the following year.