

New Homeowner Guide to Homestead Exemption



Congratulations on your recent purchase of a Seminole County home! If you are making the home your primary residence, you may be eligible for significant tax savings with Homestead Exemption!

What is Homestead Exemption?

State law allows Florida homeowners to claim up to a \$50,000 Homestead Exemption on their primary residence. The year after a Homestead Exemption is granted, its assessed value cannot increase more than 3% per year, or the increase in the Consumer Price Index, whichever is lower.

How do I qualify?

As of January 1st, you must:

- be a US citizen or have a Permanent Resident Card (copy required)
- be a legal resident of Seminole County with **your Florida Drivers license updated to reflect new address**
- have recorded legal or beneficial title to the property
- maintain the property as your permanent home or the permanent home of a person who is legally or naturally dependent on you

When do I file?

You will receive a postcard from our office in the mail with details on filing for homestead. However, you can file for Homestead Exemption as soon as you have recorded title to the property. Please note that our records must reflect you as the owner of the property and it can take several days for our office to receive your deed and put the property in your name.

- **January 1st through March 1st - Regular Filing time (For the current tax year)**
- **March 2nd through December 31st - Prefiling (For the upcoming tax year)**

Please note: *if previous owner received a homestead exemption on your property, you will retain that benefit for the current tax year. You must apply for homestead exemption in your name for the upcoming tax year.*

How do I file?

You *must* file for homestead exemption with the Seminole County Property Appraiser's office. There are three ways to do so:

- Online at **www.scpafl.org** (click the 'FILE HOMESTEAD' link)
- By mail (call **407-665-7506** to request an application be mailed to you)
- At our office located at **1101 E. First Street, Sanford, FL**

Are there other exemptions available?

In addition to Homestead, there are exemptions available for Limited Income Seniors, Veterans, Widows/Widowers and Disability. There are income requirements and separate forms to fill out. For details, visit our website at www.scpafil.org.

What is portability?

Portability is the ability to transfer accumulated Save Our Homes "Savings" from your existing or prior homestead property in Florida to a new property established as your homestead. Your new homestead must be established within two years of selling or abandoning your existing or prior homestead. You must apply for portability and may do so when applying for homestead.

What if my property is held in a trust?

If your property is held in a trust, you will be asked to submit your trust documents for review to determine if you are eligible for the exemption.

What proof of residency information is required?

When applying for homestead exemption, you must provide:

- A copy of Florida Driver's License* for each applicant that **reflects the address of the property for which you are seeking the exemption**
- A copy of your spouse's Florida Driver's License is required even if they are not on title
- If you are not a U.S. citizen, you must provide a copy of your resident alien (green) card
- Social security numbers for all applicants, their spouse or any occupant who may be entitled to the exemption

**If you do not drive you must provide the following:*

- Copy of Florida Identification card reflecting the property address
- Affidavit of non-driver
- Seminole County Voter's Registration or a recorded Seminole County Declaration of Domicile



For more information on exemptions, or to file online, visit our website at

www.scpafil.org

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