



TOWN OF CAPE ELIZABETH

Town Hall
P.O. Box 6260
320 Ocean House Road
Cape Elizabeth, Maine 04107-0060

799-5251
Area Code 207
Facsimile 799-7141
Website: www.capeelizabeth.com

Dear Resident,

Thank you for your interest in Cape Elizabeth's **"Property Tax Assistance Program"**. When bringing in your application, please ensure that you bring the necessary documents to show that you meet the qualifications for the program. The Assessor's office will not keep any confidential records but we do need to see them for verification.

The three main qualifications are: 1). Applicant is age 65 or older by the application deadline; 2). Applicant has been a Cape Elizabeth resident for 10 years or longer by the application deadline; 3). Federal Adjusted Gross Income (household) is less than \$70,000.

If you do not file Federal income taxes, you can bring in your assembled income information (typically your Social Security Earnings Statement) to the Assessing Department. We can review the information to determine if you qualify and assist you in filing your application.

To receive a benefit from the Town of Cape Elizabeth's Property Tax Assistance Program, you must meet the eligibility criteria listed above and your property tax must exceed 5% of your Federal Adjusted Gross Income.

Please return the completed application to the Assessor's office no later than November 18, 2024. If we can assist you further please call at (207) 799-1619 or email Clinton.swett@capeelizabeth.org.

Sincerely,

Clinton J. Swett, Town Assessor CMA #722-2
320 Ocean House Road
Cape Elizabeth, Maine 04107
Email clinton.swett@capeelizabeth.org Telephone (207) 799 – 1619

*** BENEFIT UPDATE***

Town Council is in the final stages of INCREASING the reimbursements for this program, based on the household income level. It will be a 3-tier approach with each tier receiving the following benefit:

<u>INCOME BRACKET</u>	<u>BENEFIT</u>
\$0 TO \$30,000	\$ 1,500
\$30,001 TO \$50,000	\$ 1,000
\$50,001 TO \$70,000	\$ 750

Date Received:



TOWN OF CAPE ELIZABETH

2025 Senior Tax Assistance Program

For Property Tax Assessed as of April 1, 2024

Application Deadline – November 18, 2024

Applicant's Name

Signature and Today's Date

Date of Birth

Spouse's Name

Signature and Today's Date

Applicant's Date of Birth

Daytime Telephone Number

Property Location

PLEASE TURN PAGE OVER AND FILL OUT OTHER SIDE



TOWN OF CAPE ELIZABETH

2025 Senior Tax Assistance Program

For Property Tax Assessed as of April 1, 2024

Application Deadline – November 18, 2024

Please provide documentation for sections 1 through 3

<p>1. Federal Adjusted Gross Income from filed Federal Tax return form 1040, 1040-A, or 1040-EZ</p> <p>2. Social Security Benefit Statement (<i>if you do NOT file Federal Income Taxes</i>)</p> <p>3. Additional Income of other adults in household?</p>	<p>Provide copy of 1st page of 2023 Income Tax Return</p>
	<p>Provide copy Social Security Benefit Statement <i>(if you do NOT file Income Taxes)</i></p>
	<p>Circle</p> <p>YES or NO</p> <p>If YES, how much income? \$ _____</p>
LAND VALUE	APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> DENY <input type="checkbox"/>
BLDG VALUE	Reason if denied?
TOTAL EXEMPTS	
TAXABLE VALUE	
TAXES	Clinton Swett, Assessor
MAP/LOT UNIQUE 2024 ACCT No# Patriot PID#	

Please return this application to the Assessing Department (2nd floor of the Town Hall). This application is considered **CONFIDENTIAL** and not subject to public viewing. If you have any questions, please contact the Assessor, Clinton Swett at (207) 799-1619 or email at CLINTON.SWETT@CAPEELIZABETH.ORG.



TOWN OF CAPE ELIZABETH

Explaining the Senior Tax Relief Program

Parameters of the program:

Age	65 years or older
Property Owner for...	10 years or more
Homestead Exemption	Already receiving it
Federal Adjusted Gross Income	\$70,000 or less
Benefit Cap	Between \$750 and \$1,500 (based on income)
Taxes	Exceed 5% of Federal Adjusted Gross Income
Application date	November 18, 2024
Assessor report to Council on	1 st Council Meeting in December
Checks to applicants by	End of January 2025

- 1. What is this program?** It allows seniors to receive between \$750 and \$1,500 in rebates for property taxes paid last year, based on house hold income
- 2. Who can apply?** Applicants need to be at least 65 years of age and reside in Cape Elizabeth for 10 years. The test for eligibility then looks at how much of an applicant's income (5%) has to be paid in property taxes. For every dollar the property taxes are more than 5% of income a rebate is paid. A new application MUST be submitted each year, this is to verify if there are any changes in annual income.
- 3. When will I receive my check?** If you are eligible to receive a rebate, a check will be mailed to you by the end of January of 2025.
- 4. Why was 5% of income chosen as a threshold for creating eligibility?** Relying upon the judgements underlying the State's successful earlier program, any percentage in the 4-6% range is probably appropriate as a limit on how much of an applicant's income should go to property tax.
- 5. Why was \$70,000 chosen as an income gap?** Several benchmarks were considered. The median household income of people 65 years and older is approximately \$59,700, based on Federal numbers. Scarborough, our neighbor to the South with a similar program, uses \$50,000 as their income gap.
- 6. So a person with income just over \$70,000 gets no benefit?** The draft does cut off eligibility. This is somewhat inequitable but the formula as proposed has a progressive element (higher income levels require higher tax obligations).

7. Why was Federal Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) chosen? The premise was to use a suitable number that nearly every applicant would have. Federal AGI is the simplest of the readily available numbers and is much simpler than Maine AGI. It is anticipated that few, if any recipients, will have sources of income that escape Federal AGI and staff can monitor for any anomalies.

8. Please explain the graduated scale of income and the different caps. The Town Council has added a graduated scale of benefits based on income. For household income

Between zero and \$30,000 your benefit would be **\$1,500**

Between \$30,001 and \$50,000 your benefit would be **\$1,000** and

Between \$50,001 and \$70,000 your benefit would be **\$750**.

9. Are renters and persons not filing tax returns covered? YES! For renters the same formula applies using 18% of rent (the State figure proposed) as their “property taxes”. The State of Maine requires that renters must be included in this program. As a practical matter, few renters are expected to be 65 and 10 years residents. Rent subsidies cannot be used to qualify. Non-filers only need to show their W-2’s and 1099’s to allow the Assessor to calculate the Federal AGI.

10. Will the new program be too complicated to manage with our limited resources in Assessing?

The formula focuses on simplicity. It uses information that is readily available to applicants and is easily calculated by the Assessor. No sensitive documents will be or need to be retained by the town.

If you have additional questions, please contact the Assessor, Clinton Swett, at (207) 799-1619 or email Clinton.swett@capeelizabeth.org.