

**WAC 458-16A-020 Nonprofit homes for the aging—Initial application and annual renewal.** (1) **Introduction.** This section explains the initial application process that must be followed when a home for the aging wishes to obtain a property tax exemption under RCW 84.36.041. This section also describes the annual renewal requirements that a home must follow to retain its tax exempt status, as well as the role of the assessor's office and the department of revenue in administering this exemption. Throughout this section, all requirements will pertain to all types of homes for the aging including, but not limited to, adult care homes, assisted living facilities, continuing care retirement communities (CCRC), and independent housing.

(2) **Definitions.** For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Assessor" means the county assessor or any agency or person who is duly authorized to act on behalf of the assessor.

(b) "Combined disposable income" means the disposable income of the person submitting the income verification form, plus the disposable income of the person's spouse or domestic partner, and the disposable income of each cotenant occupying the dwelling unit for the preceding calendar year, less amounts paid by the person submitting the income verification form, the person's spouse or domestic partner, or any cotenant during the previous year for the treatment or care of any of them received in the dwelling unit or in a nursing home.

(i) If the person submitting the income verification form was retired for two months or more of the preceding calendar year, the combined disposable income of the person will be calculated by multiplying the average monthly combined disposable income of the person during the months the person was retired by twelve.

(ii) If the income of the person submitting the income verification form is reduced for two or more months of the preceding calendar year by reason of the death of the person's spouse or domestic partner, the combined disposable income of the person will be calculated by multiplying the average monthly combined disposable income of the person after the death of the spouse or domestic partner by twelve.

(c) "Continuing care retirement community" or "CCRC" means an entity that provides shelter and services under continuing care contracts with its residents or includes a health care facility or health service.

(d) "Continuing care contract" means a contract to provide a person, for the duration of that person's life or for a term in excess of one year, shelter along with nursing, medical, health-related or personal care services, that is conditioned upon the transfer of property, the payment of an entrance fee to the provider of the services, and/or the payment of periodic charges in consideration for the care and services provided. A continuing care contract is not excluded from this definition because the contract is mutually terminable or because shelter and services are not provided at the same location.

(e) "Cotenant" means a person who resides with an eligible resident and who shares personal financial resources with the eligible resident.

(f) "Department" means the department of revenue.

(g) "Domestic partner" means a partner registered under chapter 26.60 RCW or a partner in a legal union of two persons of the same sex, other than a marriage, that was validly formed in another jurisdiction, and that is substantially equivalent to a domestic partnership under chapter 26.60 RCW.

(h) "Domestic partnership" means a partnership registered under chapter 26.60 RCW or a legal union of two persons of the same sex, other than a marriage, that was validly formed in another jurisdiction, and that is substantially equivalent to a domestic partnership under chapter 26.60 RCW.

(i) "Eligible resident" means a person who:

(i) Occupied the dwelling unit as their principal place of residence as of December 31st of the assessment year the home first became operational or in each subsequent year, occupied the dwelling unit as their principal place of residence as of January 1st of the assessment year. If an eligible resident is confined to a hospital or nursing home and the dwelling unit is temporarily unoccupied or occupied by a spouse or domestic partner, a person financially dependent on the claimant for support, or both, the dwelling will still be considered occupied by the eligible resident;

(ii) Is sixty-one years of age or older on December 31st of the year in which the claim for exemption is filed, or is, at the time of filing, retired from regular gainful employment by reason of disability. A surviving spouse or domestic partner of a person who was receiving an exemption at the time of the person's death will qualify for this exemption if the surviving spouse or domestic partner is fifty-seven years of age or older and otherwise meets the requirements of this subsection; and

(iii) Has a combined disposable income that is no more than the greater of twenty-two thousand dollars or eighty percent of the median income adjusted for family size as determined by federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the county in which the person resides.

(j) "First assessment year the home becomes operational" or "the assessment year the home first became operational" means the first year the home becomes occupied by and provides services to eligible residents. Depending upon the facts, this year will be the year during which construction of the home is completed or the year during which a nonprofit organization purchases or acquires an existing home and begins to operate it as a nonprofit home for the aging.

(k) "Homes for the aging" or "home(s)" means a residential housing facility that:

(i) Provides a housing arrangement chosen voluntarily by the resident, the resident's guardian or conservator, or another responsible person;

(ii) Has only residents who are at least sixty-one years of age or who have needs for care generally compatible with persons who are at least sixty-one years of age; and

(iii) Provides varying levels of care and supervision, as agreed to at the time of admission or as determined necessary at subsequent times of reappraisal.

(l) "HUD" means the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(m) "Occupied dwelling unit" means a living unit that is occupied either on January 1st of the year in which the claim for exemption is filed or on December 31st of the first assessment year the home becomes operational and in which the claim for exemption is filed.

(n) "Property that is reasonably necessary" means all property that is:

(i) Operated and used by a home; and

(ii) The use of which is restricted to residents, guests, or employees of a home.

(3) **Application for exemption.** The tax exemption authorized by RCW 84.36.041 is claimed by and benefits a nonprofit home for the aging, not the residents of the home. Therefore, the claim for this exemption is submitted by a home to the department.

(a) If a claim for exemption is filed on behalf of a home under RCW 84.36.041 and the exemption is granted, no resident of that home may receive a personal exemption under RCW 84.36.381.

(b) A listing of the varying levels of care and supervision provided or coordinated by the home must accompany all initial applications submitted for exemption. Examples of the varying levels of care and supervision include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (i) Conducting routine room checks;
- (ii) Arranging for or providing transportation;
- (iii) Arranging for or providing meals;
- (iv) On-site medical personnel;
- (v) Monitoring of medication; or
- (vi) Housekeeping services.

(c) Homes having real property that is used for purposes other than as a home (for example, property used for a barber shop) must provide the department with a floor plan identifying the square footage devoted to each exempt and nonexempt use.

(d) At the time an application for exemption is submitted, the home must submit proof that it is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c) organization.

(e) Homes that apply for a total exemption because of tax exempt bond financing must submit a copy of the regulatory agreement between the home and the entity that issues the bonds. When only a portion of the home is financed by a program using tax exempt bonds, the home must submit a site plan of the home indicating the areas so financed.

(4) **Segregation.** A nonprofit organization that provides shelter and services to elderly and disabled individuals may use the facility for more than one purpose that is exempt from property tax under chapter 84.36 RCW. Property that is used for more than one exempt purpose and that qualifies for exemption under a statute other than RCW 84.36.041 will be segregated and exempted pursuant to the applicable statute.

(a) If a home includes a nursing home, the department will segregate the home and the part of the facility that is used as a nursing home. The department will separately determine the eligibility of the home under RCW 84.36.041 and the nursing home under RCW 84.36.040 for the property tax exemption available under each statute.

Exception: If the home does not receive medicaid funds (including CCRCs that are permitted to receive medicaid funds during an initial transition period only) and is seeking a total exemption because of tax exempt bond financing, the home and nursing home will be considered as a whole when the set-aside requirements are applied.

(b) Dwelling units that are occupied by residents who do not meet the age or disability requirements of RCW 84.36.041 will be segregated and taxed.

(c) Common or shared areas. Areas of a home that are jointly used for two or more purposes exempt from property tax under chapter 84.36 RCW will be exempted under RCW 84.36.041.

(i) The joint use of the common or shared areas must be reasonably necessary for the purposes of the nonprofit organization, association, or corporation exempt from property tax under chapter 84.36 RCW. A kitchen, dining room, and laundry room are examples of the types of common or shared areas for which a property tax exemption may be granted.

(ii) Example. A nonprofit organization uses its facility as a home for the aging and a nursing home. The home and nursing home jointly use the kitchen and dining room. The home may receive a property tax exemption for the common or shared areas under RCW 84.36.041. The eligibility of the other areas of the facility will be determined by the appropriate statute. The home's eligibility will be determined by RCW 84.36.041 and the nursing home's eligibility will be determined by RCW 84.36.040.

(5) **Homes subsidized by HUD.** Homes subsidized by a HUD program must initially and each March 31st thereafter provide the department with a letter of certification from HUD of continued HUD subsidy and a list of the name, age, and/or disability of all residents. If the property is subsidized by more than one HUD contract and one of the contracts expires or is otherwise no longer in effect, the eligibility of the portion of the facility still subsidized by HUD will be conditioned on receipt of a letter of certification from HUD and a listing of all persons residing on the property. The eligibility of the remainder of the property will be determined by the number of dwelling units occupied by eligible residents on January 1st following the expiration or cancellation of the HUD subsidy.

(6) **Homes that are not subsidized by HUD.** If a home is not subsidized by HUD or does not meet the requirements to receive a total exemption because of tax exempt bond financing, it may receive a total or partial exemption from property tax. The extent of the exemption will be determined by the number of dwelling units occupied by eligible residents. If more than fifty percent of the dwelling units are occupied by eligible residents, the home may receive a total exemption. Alternatively, if less than fifty percent of the dwelling units are occupied by eligible residents, the home may receive partial exemption for its real property on a unit by unit basis and a total exemption for its personal property. An income verification form will be used to determine if a resident of a home meets the criteria of "eligible resident." During the initial application process, the residents of a home applying for exemption will be asked to submit an income verification form with the assessor of the county in which the home is located and the assessor and/or the department may request any relevant information deemed necessary to make a determination.

(a) The type of income verification form required and its due date depends upon the date the home first became operational and began to provide services to eligible residents:

(i) If the home was operating and providing services to eligible residents on the January 1st assessment date, the residents are to submit Form REV 64-0043 between January 1st and July 1st of the year preceding the year in which the tax is due; or

(ii) If the home started operating and providing services to eligible residents after the January 1st assessment date, the residents are to submit Form REV 64-0042 on or before December 31st of the year preceding the year in which the tax is due. In this situation, no income verification forms will be required during the following year if the same eligible residents occupy the same dwelling units on December 31st and January 1st of the subsequent year.

(b) If two or more residents occupy one unit, only one cotenant is required to file verification of combined disposable income, as defined in subsection (2) of this section, with the assessor.

(c) Form REV 64-0043 will not be accepted by the assessor if it is submitted or postmarked after July 1st unless the assessor and/or the department has agreed to waive this deadline. Form REV 64-0042

will not be accepted if it is submitted or postmarked after December 31st unless the assessor and/or department agrees to waive this deadline.

(d) After the application for exemption is approved, residents will not be required to file a new income verification form unless a change in their circumstances occurs or the assessor requests it. However, at any time after the initial application is approved, assessors and/or the department may:

(i) Request residents to complete Form REV 64-0043;

(ii) Conduct audits; and

(iii) Request other relevant information to ensure continued eligibility.

(e) By March 31st each year, a home not subsidized by HUD that wishes to retain its exempt property tax status must file with the department a list of the total number of dwelling units in its complex, the number of occupied dwelling units in its complex as of January 1st, the number of previously qualified dwelling units in its complex that are no longer occupied by the same eligible residents, and a list of the name, age, and/or disability of all residents and the date upon which they moved into or occupied the home. If a home's eligibility was based upon the number of units occupied on December 31st, the home must only provide the department with an amended list of additions or deletions as of the subsequent January 1st assessment date.

(7) **Homes financed by tax exempt bonds.** Homes that receive a total property tax exemption because of tax exempt bond financing must initially and each March 31st thereafter provide the department with a letter of certification from the agency or organization monitoring compliance with the bond requirements. The letter of certification must verify that the home is in full compliance with all requirements and set-asides of the underlying regulatory agreement.

(a) If the set-aside requirements contained in the regulatory agreement differ from the set-aside requirements established by the department and set forth in WAC 458-16A-010, the department may require the residents of the home to submit income verification forms (Form REV 64-0042 or 64-0043) to the assessor of the county in which the home is located.

(b) A home for the aging that is receiving a property tax exemption must annually submit a list of the name, age, and/or disability of all residents in the home to the department.

(8) **Assessor's responsibilities.** Assessors will determine the age or disability and income eligibility of all residents who file Form REV 64-0042 or 64-0043, the income verification forms. By July 15th each year or by January 15th of the assessment year following the first assessment year a home becomes operational, the assessor will forward a copy of Form REV 64-0042 or 64-0043 to the department for each resident who meets the eligibility requirements.

(9) **Appeals.** An applicant who is determined not to be an "eligible resident" by the assessor and a home that is denied a property tax exemption by the department each have the right to appeal. Appeals must be filed within thirty days of the date the notice of ineligibility or denial was mailed by the assessor or the department.

(a) If the assessor determines that an applicant does not meet the definition of an "eligible resident," the resident may appeal this decision to the board of equalization of the county in which the home is located.

(b) If the department denies, in whole or in part, an application for exemption, the home may appeal this denial to the state board of tax appeals.

(10) **Additional requirements.** Any nonprofit home for the aging that applies for a property tax exemption under this section must also comply with the provisions of WAC 458-16A-010 and 458-16-165. WAC 458-16A-010 contains information regarding the basic eligibility requirements to receive a total or partial exemption under RCW 84.36.041. WAC 458-16-165 sets forth additional requirements that must be complied with to obtain a property tax exemption pursuant to RCW 84.36.041.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.010, 84.08.070, 84.52.0502, and 84.55.060. WSR 15-22-086, § 458-16A-020, filed 11/3/15, effective 12/4/15. Statutory Authority: RCW 84.36.041 and 84.36.865. WSR 08-16-064, § 458-16A-020, filed 7/30/08, effective 8/30/08; WSR 00-09-086, § 458-16A-020, filed 4/18/00, effective 5/19/00. Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.010, 84.08.070 and 84.36.041. WSR 95-06-042, § 458-16A-020, filed 2/24/95, effective 3/27/95.]