

MCL 211.7u Poverty Exemption Taxpayer Fact Sheet and Asset Test

MCL 211.7u provides for a property tax exemption, in whole or part, for the principal residence of persons who, by reason of poverty, are unable to contribute to the public charges. For purposes of the poverty exemption, the term “principal residence” is how principal residence exemption and qualified agricultural property are defined in MCL 211.7dd. The exemption does not apply to property of a corporation. This Taxpayer Fact Sheet includes updates made to MCL 211.7u by Public Act 253 of 2020.

How To Apply For The Poverty Exemption

To request a poverty exemption, a taxpayer must file:

1. Form 5737 *Poverty Exemption Application and Affirmation*
2. All required additional documentation (such as federal/state income tax returns)

Form 5737 along with any additional documentation, must be filed with the local assessing unit where the property is located. **Do not file these forms with the Department of Treasury or the State Tax Commission.** The forms may be submitted to the local assessing unit on or after January 1 but before the day prior to the last day of the December Board of Review during the year in which the exemption is requested.

Taxpayers should contact the local assessing unit directly to verify deadline dates for submission of the forms to ensure the application gets reviewed by a Board of Review during that calendar year.

In addition to filing Form 5737 and any supporting documentation, a taxpayer must do all the following to be eligible for the poverty exemption:

1. Own and occupy the property as a principal residence.
2. Provide federal and state income tax returns for the current or immediately preceding year, including any property tax credits, for all persons **residing in the principal residence** (disclosure of the income of an owner who is not residing in the principal residence is not required). Federal and state income tax returns are not required for a person residing in the principal residence if that person was not required to file a federal or state income tax return. Instead, Form 4988, *Poverty Exemption Affidavit* may be filed for all persons residing in the residence who were not required to file federal or state income tax returns in the current or immediately preceding year.
3. Produce a valid driver license or other form of identification, if requested.
4. Produce a deed, land contract, or other evidence of ownership of the property, if requested.
5. Meet the federal poverty guidelines published in the prior calendar year in the Federal Register by the United States Department of Health and Human Services **or** alternative

guidelines adopted by the local assessing unit. The alternative guidelines cannot provide income eligibility requirements less than the federal guidelines.

2026 Federal Poverty Guidelines

Size of Family Unit	Poverty Guidelines
1	\$15,650
2	\$21,150
3	\$26,650
4	\$32,150
5	\$37,650
6	\$43,150
7	\$48,650
8	\$54,150
For each additional person	\$5,500

6. Meet the asset level test adopted by the local assessing unit.

Howell Township Asset Test: The value of the Homestead, one automobile, and household personal property (i.e., clothing, furniture, and appliances) will not be included when determining the assets of the applicant. **The assets of the applicant cannot exceed \$10,000.** This includes liquid assets such as cash, bank accounts, retirement accounts etc. It also includes physical assets that can be sold such as boats, travel trailers, additional automobiles etc.

Appeal Rights

An appeal of a decision of the March Board of Review is made by completing and submitting a petition to the Michigan Tax Tribunal no later than July 31 of the same year. A decision of the July or December Board of Review may be appealed by completing and submitting a petition to the Michigan Tax Tribunal within 35 days of the July or December Board of Review's decision. More information on how to file an appeal is available by contacting the Michigan Tax Tribunal. Information can also be viewed on the Michigan Tax Tribunal's website at <https://www.michigan.gov/taxtribunal>.