

2016 Due Dates

Form #	Form Description	Initial Due Date	Final Date Accepted
IN-111	2015 Vermont Income Tax Return	April 18	<i>NOTE:</i> Penalties, interest, and late filing fees may accrue after initial due date.
IN-151	Application for Extension of Time to File Form IN-111 VT Individual Income Tax Return	April 18	
PR-141	2015 Renter Rebate Claim	April 18	Oct. 17
HS-122	2016 Homestead Declaration	April 18	Oct. 17
HS-122	2016 Property Tax Adjustment Claim	April 18	Oct. 17

Who Must File in Vermont?

Homestead Declaration

A Homestead Declaration must be **filed by April 18 of this year** by every Vermont resident whose property meets the definition of a homestead. A “homestead” is the principal dwelling and parcel of land surrounding the dwelling. It is your responsibility as the property owner to claim the property as a homestead if you meet, or expect to meet, the following requirements: **1)** you are a Vermont resident, and **2)** you own and occupy a homestead as your domicile as of April 1, 2016. **NOTE:** If you meet these requirements, except that your homestead is leased to a tenant on April 1, 2016, you may still claim it as a homestead if it is not leased for more than 182 days in the calendar year. For definitions of “domicile,” “resident,” and “nonresident,” see our website.

Who is Eligible to File?

Property Tax Adjustment Claim

Vermont homeowners may be eligible for a credit against their 2016/2017 Vermont property tax. The 2016 property tax adjustment is based on 2015 household income and 2015/2016 property tax. A homeowner may be eligible for an adjustment **if all four of the following requirements are met:**

1. Filed a valid Homestead Declaration
2. Domiciled in Vermont all of calendar year 2015
3. Not claimed as a dependent by another taxpayer for tax year 2015
4. Had household income in 2015 up to \$137,500 (Complete Schedule HI-144 to determine household income.)

General Instructions

Use Whole Dollars

Round entries to the nearest whole dollar. The cents are preprinted with zeroes.

Incomplete Forms

If information necessary to support a credit or benefit is missing, your filing may be processed but the credit denied. This may result in a bill or reduced refund. You will have an opportunity to supply the information. In some instances, your tax forms may be returned to you. The credit or benefit cannot be processed until the Department receives the missing document(s) or information.

Forms That Cannot Be Processed

If your filing is not acceptable for processing, the Department may return your paper forms to you. The filing date of your return then becomes your resubmission date. The Department may also transfer your filing information onto acceptable forms. You may be assessed a \$25 processing fee that partially covers the costs of transferring the information. Examples of unacceptable filings include the following: forms marked “draft” or “do not file,” forms not pre-approved by the Department, photocopies of forms, reduced or enlarged forms, faxed forms, forms not written in blue or black ink, or forms generated from different sources.

Requests for Additional Information

You may be asked to supply additional information to clarify items on your Vermont income tax return. Such a request does not necessarily mean that you filed improperly or that you have been selected for an audit. These requests are a routine part of processing. Your return, however, cannot be processed until the information is received.

Your Income Tax Refund May Be Used to Pay an Outstanding Bill (Offset)

Your income tax refund will be taken to pay a bill that you or your spouse/civil union partner owe to the Vermont Department of Taxes and/or other government agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service, Office of Child Support, Department of Corrections, Vermont courts, student loan agencies, Vermont state colleges, and tax agencies of other states. You will receive notification if your refund is used as an offset to pay outstanding debt.

Injured Spouse Claims

If you file a joint return with your spouse or civil union partner and believe tax debt owed by your spouse/civil union partner may reduce your portion of the refund, you may file an “injured spouse” claim. Visit www.bit.ly/injuredspouse for more information.

To make an injured spouse claim, please send the following four documents **prior** to filing your return:

1. A letter with details of your claim
2. Copy of Federal return 8379 (if you filed one with the IRS)
3. Copy of Federal Schedules C and SE
4. Form 1099G for unemployment

Mail to: Vermont Department of Taxes
ATTN: Injured Spouse Unit
PO Box 1645
Montpelier, VT 05601-1645

Homestead Declaration and Property Tax Adjustment

FORM HS-122 SECTION A Vermont Homestead Declaration

THE HOMESTEAD DECLARATION must be filed each year by Vermont residents for purposes of the state education tax rate. The Declaration identifies the property as the homestead of the Vermont resident. A Vermont homestead is taxed at the homestead education property tax rate, while a different education property tax rate applies to non-homestead property. Non-homestead property is property used for commercial purposes or property not used as the primary residence, such as a second home, camp, or summer cottage. A property may be classified as both homestead and non-homestead. This occurs when a part of the home is used for commercial purposes or as a rental. The property tax bill will show a homestead education property tax rate and a non-homestead education property tax rate. For more information on the Homestead Declaration, see 32 V.S.A. §§ 5410(7), 5410, and Reg. § 1.401(7).

You must file a declaration by April 18, 2016, if you meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

1. Own the Vermont property as your principal residence as of April 1, 2016, **AND**
2. Expect to physically occupy the Vermont property as your domicile. The declaration must be filed even if it is late. Other ownership circumstances include the following:
 - Joint ownership – only one owner occupant should file.
 - Owners with a life estate interest who occupy the dwelling as their primary residence must file.
 - Certain trusts may qualify as a homestead. For more information, read Reg. § 1.5401(7) Homestead on our website. Please note that changes to this regulation are being proposed to conform to amendments made to this statute.
 - A residence, held by an estate which was the homestead of the decedent at the time of death, may file a homestead if not rented.

Homestead Declarations filed **by April 18, 2016**, are considered timely, classified as homesteads on the grand list, and taxed at the homestead education property tax rate.

Homestead Declarations filed **after April 18, 2016**, are classified as homesteads but may be assessed the following penalty by the town:

- Up to 3% if the nonresidential rate is higher than the homestead education property tax rate.
- Up to 8% if the nonresidential rate is lower than the homestead education property tax rate.

Homestead Declarations filed **after Oct. 17, 2016**, will be classified as non-homestead. The owner will be charged the higher of the two rates, assessed a penalty, and must pay any additional property tax and interest due.

2016 Form HS-122 Instructions

What if you SELL your property before April 1, 2016? If you filed a Homestead Declaration and Property Tax Adjustment Claim before April 1, 2016, you must withdraw the declaration and claim using Form HS-122W, available on our website.

What if you rent your homestead on April 1 and occupy it yourself for fewer than 183 days in the calendar year? You must withdraw the declaration using Form HS-122W. Form HS-122W is available on our website. Because the Homestead Declaration is a prerequisite to file a Property Tax Adjustment claim, you will no longer be eligible for the adjustment.

Line-By-Line Instructions

Claimant Information: Enter your Social Security Number, name, and address. If applicable, enter the Social Security Number and name of your spouse/civil union partner. Enter your date of birth. Example: March 27, 1948, is entered as 03 27 1948

Location of Homestead: Enter the physical location (street, road name) Examples: 123 Maple Street or 276 Route 12A Please do not enter a post office box or write "same," "see above," or the city/town name.

Line A1 Vermont School District Code: Enter the 3-digit school district code where you pay education property tax as of April 1, 2016. Most towns print the code on the property tax bill. A school district code chart is available in the instructions for Form IN-111 and on our website.

Line A2 Legal Residence: Enter the town or city name of your legal residence as of April 1, 2016. If there is both a city and town with the same name, please specify. Examples: Barre City or Barre Town, St. Albans City or St. Albans Town

Line A3 SPAN (School Property Account Number): This is a unique 11-digit identification number assigned by the town or city and is printed on the property tax bill. It is very important to verify your SPAN. The property tax adjustment is credited to the property tax bill for this SPAN.

Line A4 Business Use of Home: Enter percentage of the dwelling used for business. Leave blank if there is no business use or the business use is 25% or less.

Line A5 Rental Use of Home: Enter the percentage of the dwelling that is rented. All rental use is required to be reported even if it is 25% or under.

Line A6 Business or Rental Use of Improvements and Other Buildings on the Property Check the applicable "Yes" or "No" box. Check the "Yes" box if any improvements or other buildings are rented out or used for business.

Lines A7-A10 Special Situations: Check situation applicable.

FORM HS-122 SECTION B Property Tax Adjustment Claim

To be eligible for a **PROPERTY TAX ADJUSTMENT CLAIM**, you must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

1. The property must be declared as your homestead
2. You were domiciled in Vermont for the entire 2015 calendar year
3. You own the property as your principal residence on April 1, 2016
4. You were not claimed as a dependent of another taxpayer for the 2015 tax year
5. You meet the household income criteria of \$137,500 or less

Due Date - APRIL 18, 2016

Property Tax Adjustment Claims filed **between April 19 and Oct. 17, 2016**, will have a \$15 late filing fee deducted from the property tax adjustment.

2016 Property Tax Adjustment Claims filed after Oct. 17, 2016, cannot be accepted.

Incomplete claims cannot be processed and are not considered filed.

Receipt Date Forms mailed through the U.S. Post Office are considered timely if received by the Department within three business days of the due date. If you file electronically, the receipt date is the transmission date. If you bring the form to the Department in person, it must be on or before the due date.

HOMEOWNER DECEASED before April 1, 2016? If the claim was not filed jointly with another owner before April 1, 2016, the claim must be withdrawn using Form HS-122W. The right to file a property tax adjustment claim is personal to the claimant and does not survive the claimant's death.

PURCHASED a home as your primary residence on or before April 1, 2016? You must file Form HS-122 Section A and B to make a property tax adjustment claim. You can file online on our website.

Amending Form HS-122 An error on the 2016 Form HS-122 may be corrected up to Oct. 17, 2016. After that date, only household income may be amended.

INJURED SPOUSE CLAIMS: To make an “injured spouse” claim, send the following information **prior** to filing your claim;

1. A letter with details of your claim
2. Copy of Federal return 8379 (if you filed this form with the IRS)
3. Documentation of your ownership interest

Mail information to:

Vermont Department of Taxes
ATTN: Injured Spouse Unit
PO Box 1645
Montpelier VT 05601-1645

The Department will notify you if the property tax adjustment is taken to pay a bill. You have 30 days from the date on the notice to submit the injured spouse claim to the Department.

Line-By-Line Instructions

Complete Schedule HI-144 first to determine if you meet the household income criteria.

Schedule HI-144 must be submitted with Form HS-122. See instructions for Line B9 Mobile Home Lot Rent, Lines B10 & B11 Allocated Property Tax from Land Trust, Cooperative, or Nonprofit Mobile Home Park, and Lines B12 & B13, the education and municipal tax on a property whose housesite value is less than 2 acres and crosses town boundaries. Additional documents may be required.

Lines B1 – B3 Eligibility Questions: Check the appropriate “Yes” or “No” box to answer the eligibility questions. ALL eligibility questions must be answered.

Information for Lines B4-B6 is found on your 2015/2016 property tax bill.

Line B4 Housesite Value: Enter the assessed housesite value shown on the 2015/2016 property tax bill. See the instructions under Special Situations for information on new construction or purchase of a new home.

Line B5 Housesite Education Property Tax: Enter the education property tax shown on the 2015/2016 property tax bill.

Line B6 Housesite Municipal Tax: Enter the municipal property tax shown on the 2015/2016 property tax bill.

Line B7 Ownership Interest: If you and the members of the household own and occupy the property as your principal residence, enter 100%. See the instructions under Special Situations if there is another owner(s) that does not live in the household or you live in a duplex.

Line B8 Household Income: Enter the amount calculated on Schedule HI-144, Line y.

Line B8a If you are amending your Household Income Schedule, please mark the box with an “X.”

Line B9 Lot Rent for a Mobile Home: If you rent a lot in a privately owned mobile home park, obtain the Landlord’s Certificate, Form LC-142, from your landlord and enter the amount of allocable rent from Line 16.

Lines B10 – B11 Allocated Tax from Land Trust, Cooperative, or Nonprofit Mobile Home Park: Enter the amount of education and municipal property tax shown on the statement issued to you by the land trust, cooperative or nonprofit mobile home park.

Lines B12 – B13 Property Tax from Contiguous Property: If you own contiguous property, you may use the property taxes from that parcel if the property tax bill for your dwelling has under two acres or part of the dwelling or a building, such as a garage, is on the contiguous property.

MAXIMUM 2016 PROPERTY TAX ADJUSTMENT IS \$8,000

The property tax adjustment will appear as a state payment on your 2016/2017 property tax bill.

Signature: Sign the property tax adjustment claim.

Date: Enter the date you sign the claim.

Disclosure Authorization: Check this box if you wish to give the Vermont Department of Taxes authorization to discuss this claim with your tax preparer. Be sure the tax preparer’s name is included.

SCHEDULE HI-144 Household Income Schedule

Domicile For a definition of “domicile,” please refer to Reg. § 1.5811(11)(A)(i)-Domicile on our website.

Homeowner Is a person who owns and occupies the housesite as his or her primary residence.

Household Income means modified adjusted gross income, but not less than zero (0), received in a calendar year by:

all persons of a household while members of that household;

AND

the spouse of the claimant who is not a member of that household and who is not legally separated from the claimant, unless the spouse is at least 62 years of age and has moved to a nursing home or other care facility with no reasonable prospect of returning to the homestead.

Household Members include you, your spouse/civil union partner, roommates, and family members (including children) even if they file their own income tax returns and are not considered dependents. Exceptions - The following are not considered household members:

- A person who is not related to any member of the household and who is living in the household under a written home sharing agreement with a nonprofit home sharing program authorized by the Vermont Department of Disability, Aging and Independent Living.
- A person living in the household who is a bona fide employee hired to provide personal care to a member of the household and who is not related to the person for whom the care is provided.
- A person who resides with the claimant for the primary reason of providing attendant care services or homemaker or companionship services with or without compensation that allows the claimant to remain in his or her home or avoid institutionalization. The claimant must be disabled or 62 years of age or older as of Dec. 31, 2015.

Members of the household for a portion of the year. You must include the income received by all persons residing in the home or apartment during the period they resided in the home or apartment.

Household Income Lines a-m on Schedule HI-144 list the items of income that are required to be reported for Household Income.

- Report your income under Column 1, Claimant.
- Your spouse/civil union partner income is reported under Column 2.
Exceptions applying to spouse/civil union partner - (1) Unless you are legally separated, your spouse/civil union partner’s income must be included even if that person is not living with you; and **(2)** Income of a spouse who is age 62 or older and has moved permanently to a nursing home or other care facility is not included.
- Report income from all others who resided in your house or apartment under Column 3, Other Persons.

Exclusions: The following are not part of household income:

- Payments by the State of Vermont for foster care pursuant to Chapters 49 and 55 of Title 33
- Payments by the State of Vermont to a family for the support of an eligible person with a developmental disability
- Payments by the State of Vermont or an agency designated in Title 18 Section 8907 for adult foster care payments (formerly “difficulty of care” payments)
- Surplus food or other relief in-kind supplied by a government agency
- The first \$6,500 of income received (earned or unearned) by a person who qualifies as a dependent of the claimant under the Internal Revenue Code **AND** who is the claimant’s parent or disabled adult child
- The first \$6,500 of income earned, such as wages, salaries, tips, etc., by a full-time student who qualifies as a dependent of the claimant (all unearned income must be reported)
- The first \$6,500 of gifts of cash and/or cash equivalents received by all household members
- Distributions from the contributions to a ROTH IRA (distributions from the earnings of the ROTH IRA are to be reported in household income)
- Gifts from a nongovernmental source, such as aid provided by the Red Cross, Salvation Army, a church, to assist paying a living expense (for example, fuel, utilities, rent)

Line-By-Line Instructions

Household Income

Line a	Cash public assistance and relief Enter all payments from the State of Vermont Agency of Human Services except for foster care payments, difficulty of care payments, food stamps, and fuel assistance. The first \$6,500 of refugee settlement payment is excluded.
Line b	Social Security, SSI, disability, railroad retirement, and veterans' benefits (taxable and nontaxable) Enter payments from Social Security as reported in Box 5 of your SSA-1099 (this box adjusts for any repayment of Social Security benefits you were required to make) or from Federal return 1040, Line 20a or 1040A, Line 14a. Social Security benefits also include SSI and SSD payments. Enter all railroad retirement from RRB-1099 and veterans' benefits.
Line c	Unemployment compensation and workers' compensation Enter the full unemployment compensation shown on Federal Form 1099-G plus any workers' compensation you received.
Line d	Wages, salaries, tips, etc. Enter the income shown in Box 1 of the W-2. Also report Federal Form 1099-MISC issued for nonemployee compensation if this is income not included as part of Line h, Business Income. See exclusions in Household Income section before completing this line.
Line e	Interest and dividends Enter the income required to be reported on Lines 8a and 9a of Federal returns 1040 or 1040A; or on Line 2 of Federal return 1040EZ plus the nontaxable interest not required to be reported on Federal return 1040EZ.
Line f	Interest on U.S., state, or municipal obligations Enter the income reported on Line 8b of Federal return 1040 or 1040A and all interest income from Federal, state or municipal government bonds. This includes interest taxed at the Federal level but exempted for Vermont income tax purposes and interest not taxed at the Federal level.
Line g	Alimony, support money, child support, cash and cash equivalent gifts Enter the total received for alimony, child support and other support money. Support money includes payment of housing expenses for household member or other financial assistance that makes it possible for the household member to live in the homestead or rental unit. Also gifts of cash or cash equivalent received by household members must be reported. Cash equivalent includes stocks, bonds, treasury obligations, certificates of deposit, or other instruments convertible to cash.
Line h	Business income Enter income attributable to a business. If there is a business loss, enter "0." For taxpayers filing Married Filing Jointly, where both spouses have business income or loss from sole proprietorships, enter the amount from Federal return 1040, Line 12, or enter "0" if Line 12 is negative, in the Claimant column.
Line i	Capital gains Report nontaxable gains from the sale of your home and gains from Federal return 1040 Schedule D: A capital loss carryforward cannot be used to offset a current year capital gain. Add back 1040, Schedule D, Lines 6 and 14 to Line 16. This cannot be less than "0." Exception: A business loss may offset a capital gain on the sale of the business's property provided (1) the loss and capital gain are for the same business; and (2) the IRS requires the capital gain to be reported; and (3) the business loss and capital gain from the sale of the business's property both occurred in the 2015 tax year. If the offset of the capital gain by the loss creates a negative amount, enter "0." A capital loss cannot offset business income.
Line j	Taxable pensions, annuities, IRAs, and retirement fund distributions. Enter the income from retirement, deferred compensation plans, and annuities as reported on Federal return 1040, Lines 15b and 16b or Federal return 1040A, Lines 11b and 12b. Household income includes non-qualified distributions from retirement and deferred compensation plans and both taxable and nontaxable federal pension and annuity benefits.
Line k	Rental and Royalty income Enter the income from each rental property you own as reported on Federal Schedule E, Part I. Each rental property stands on its own. A loss generated by one property may not be used to reduce income from a different property. Read Technical Bulletin 56 on our website for the proper treatment of rental income and losses. Room and board payments made to you by member(s) of the household are rental income and must be reported on this line. Report royalty income from Federal Form 1099-MISC, 1099-S, K-1 or Schedule E, Part I.
Line l	Income from Partnerships, S Corporations, LLCs, Farms, Trusts and Estates Federal Schedule K-1 pass-through income as required to be reported on Federal return 1040, Schedules E and/or F. Report ordinary business income, rental income and guaranteed payments from K-1 on this line. The loss from one K-1 cannot offset income from another K-1. A loss is reported as "0." See Line i instructions for the only provision allowing netting of a business loss.

Line m	Other income Sources of other income include, but are not limited to, prizes and awards, gambling or lottery winnings, director's fees, employer allowances, taxable refunds from Federal return 1040, Line 10, allowances received by dependents of armed service personnel and military subsistence payments (BAH, FSA), loss of time insurance, cost of living adjustment paid to federal employees, and other gains from Federal return 1040, Line 14. Report on this line income reported to you by Federal Form 1099-MISC or W-2G.
Line n	Add items a through m by column. Carry those amounts over to the top of the next page.
Adjustments to Income:	
The following adjustments to household income may be made for each member of the household.	
Line o	Social Security and Medicare Tax Withheld and Self-Employment Tax on Income Reported Social Security and Medicare payroll tax payments are deducted from household income, but only to the extent that the salary and wages are included in household income. Please see the examples that follow: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deferred compensation – If you made a deferred compensation contribution for the tax year, the amount of the contribution is not included in the Federal adjusted gross income as stated in Box 1 on your W-2 form. The Social Security and Medicare taxes on the W-2 must be reduced for the purposes of reporting household income on the HI-144. To report the correct value on Line o, multiply the amount stated in Box 1 on the W-2 by 7.65%. 2. Military pay – Multiplying the amount stated in Box 1 on the W-2 by 7.65% provides the correct value for this deduction. 3. Allocated tips – In addition to the figures included on the W-2, add the Social Security and Medicare payments you made as the result of completing Federal Form 4137. <p>Self-Employed Social Security and Medicare Taxes Paid Self-employed claimants may subtract from household income the amount from Federal Schedule SE, Section A, Line 5, or Section B, Line 12, that represents the Social Security and Medicare taxes paid for 2015 for income reported on HI-144. For income not required to be reported upon which Social Security and Medicare taxes were paid, multiply the income not reported on HI-144 by 15.3% and subtract the result from the Federal Schedule SE amount. The amount of Social Security and Medicare taxes reported on this line includes the allowable deduction for one-half self-employment tax on Federal return 1040, Line 27. You may be asked for a copy of your Federal Schedule SE.</p>
Line p	Child support paid Report only those payments for which receipts or other evidence of payment is available. This evidence may include cancelled checks or a statement from the Office of Child Support in addition to the name and Social Security Number of the parent receiving the payment.
Line q	Allowable Adjustments from Federal return 1040 or return 1040A The following expenses may be subtracted from income. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain business expenses of reservists - Line 24 from Federal return 1040 • Alimony paid - Line 31a from Federal return 1040 • Tuition and fees - Line 34 from Federal return 1040 or Line 19 from Federal return 1040A • Self-employed health insurance deduction – Line 29 from Federal return 1040 • Health savings account deduction - Line 25 from Federal return 1040
Line r	Add Lines o, p, and the total of Lines q1 to q5 for each column.
Line s	Subtract the total adjustments on Line r from the total income on Line n for each column. The adjustments for any individual in your household cannot exceed the income of that individual. If Line n minus Line r is negative, enter "0."
Line t	Add columns 1, 2, and 3 and enter sum. Entry cannot be less than zero (0).
Line u	For claimants under the age of 65 as of Dec. 31, 2015, enter the total of interest and dividends for all household members reported on Lines e and f in each column.
Line v	Add the three columns on Line u.
Line w	For purposes of calculating the property tax adjustment or renter rebate, household income is increased by the household total of interest and dividend income greater than \$10,000.
Line x	Subtract Line w from Line v. If Line w is more than Line v, enter zero (0).
Line y	Household Income. Add Line t and Line x. Enter this figure on HS-122 or PR-141.

Preparer: If you are a paid preparer, you must sign this claim, enter your Social Security Number or PTIN, and if employed by a business, include the EIN of the business. If someone other than the homeowner prepared this claim without charging a fee, the preparer's signature is optional.

If mailing this return, send to:

Vermont Department of Taxes
PO Box 1881
Montpelier, VT 05601-1881

Special Situations

Deceased Homeowner

Property Tax Adjustment: An estate cannot make a Property Tax Adjustment Claim on behalf of a deceased homeowner. If a homeowner files a Property Tax Adjustment Claim, but dies prior to April 1, the estate must withdraw the claim using Form HS-122W. The estate is responsible to repay any adjustment issued. If the homeowner filed a Property Tax Adjustment Claim between January and March 31 and dies after April 1, the commissioner may pay the adjustment to the town on behalf of another member of the household with ownership interest.

An estate may continue classification of the property as a homestead until the following April provided the property was the deceased homeowner's homestead at the time of death and the property is not rented.

Delinquent Property Tax The 2016 property tax adjustment applies to the current year property tax. The municipality may use any remaining adjustment towards penalty, interest, or prior year property taxes.

Nursing Home or Residential Care If the homeowner is age 62 or older and another owner who also lived in the homestead is the homeowner's spouse/civil union partner or sibling and has moved indefinitely from the homestead to a nursing home or residential care facility, the homeowner makes the Property Tax Adjustment Claim with 100% ownership. This is provided that the spouse/civil union partner or sibling does not make a Renter Rebate Claim or the spouse/civil union partner or sibling does not make a Property Tax Adjustment Claim for the same homestead.

If the homeowner has moved to a nursing home or residential care facility, a Property Tax Adjustment Claim may be made if there is a reasonable likelihood that the homeowner will be returning to the homestead and provided that the homeowner does not make a Renter Rebate Claim. The Department may ask for a doctor's certificate to help determine whether the nursing home or residential care facility is a temporary location.

Renting at the End of the Year If you owned a Vermont homestead in 2015, sold the homestead before April 1, 2015, withdrew or did not file a Property Tax Adjustment Claim and rented between the date of the sale and Dec. 31, 2015, you may be eligible for a Renter Rebate Claim for rent paid in 2015. To qualify for a renter rebate, your household income must be \$47,000 or less. **NOTE: This is the only situation where a renter rebate can be claimed for fewer than 12 months.**

OWNERSHIP SITUATIONS

Homeowner Age 62 or Older in 2015 If the homeowner shares ownership of the homestead with his or her descendant(s), the homeowner may claim 100% ownership interest on the Property Tax Adjustment Claim, even if the other owners (descendants) do not live in the homestead. A letter of explanation may be requested.

Divorced or Legally Separated Joint Owners If **(1)** you are divorced or legally separated from your spouse/civil union partner, and **(2)** your name and the name of the spouse/civil union partner from whom you are divorced or legally separated remain on the deed, and **(3)** you are awarded possession of the home, you claim as ownership percentage the property taxes for which you are responsible under the final divorce decree or court order. If the divorce decree or court order does not specify responsibility for the property taxes, the person residing in the homestead uses 50% ownership interest. The person not living in the homestead cannot make a Property Tax Adjustment Claim.

The Department may ask for a copy of the portions of the court documents showing the court, date filed, signature page, and the homestead-related provisions.

Duplex Housing **Both owners occupy the building as their principal residence.** The eligible housesite education property tax is the tax on the portion owned by each homeowner. If the town issues a property tax bill to each homeowner for his or her portion of the homestead, use the housesite value, housesite property tax, and 100% ownership interest. If the property tax bill is for the total property, prorate the housesite value, housesite property tax, and ownership interest.

Both owners do not occupy the building as their principal residence. The owner occupying the duplex as his or her principal residence must prorate for the other owner's interest.

Entity Ownership Property owned by a C or S corporation, partnership, or limited liability company cannot be claimed as an individual's homestead and is not eligible for property tax adjustment. There is an exception for a homestead located on a farm. Read Reg. § 1.5401(7)-Homestead at www.bit.ly/vttaxregs.

Life Estate A person who holds a life estate interest in a property that he or she occupies as a principal residence may make a Property Tax Adjustment Claim as if the life estate holder was the owner of the property. The deed does not have to be attached to the Property Tax Adjustment Claim but must be available for review upon Department request.

Trust Ownership A dwelling owned by a trust is not the homestead of the beneficiary unless the claimant is the sole beneficiary of the trust **and** one of the following:

1. The claimant or the claimant's spouse was the grantor of the trust, and the trust is revocable or became irrevocable solely by reason of the grantor's death;

OR

2. The claimant is the parent, grandparent, child, grandchild or sibling of the grantor, the claimant is mentally disabled or severely physically disabled, and the grantor's modified adjusted gross income is included in the household income calculation.

The term "sole beneficiary" is satisfied if the homeowner and the spouse/civil union partner are the only beneficiaries of the trust. A property owned by an irrevocable trust cannot be a homestead except as stated in (1) above. The trust document does not have to be attached to the Property Tax Adjustment Claim but must be available for review upon Department request.

BUYING and SELLING PROPERTY

Buying after April 1, 2015 For property purchased as your principal residence, you need to file a 2016 Homestead Declaration. If you are eligible to make a 2016 Property Tax Adjustment Claim and the property was declared as a homestead, use the seller's property tax bill. If the property was not a homestead in 2015, ask the town for the housesite value and the property taxes on the housesite as if it was a homestead in 2015.

Property Transactions after April 1, 2016 The property tax adjustment stays with the property. In the case of the sale or transfer of a residence, any property tax adjustment amounts related to that residence shall be allocated to the seller at closing unless the parties agree otherwise.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

New homestead construction that was built after April 1, 2015, and is owned and occupied as a principal residence on April 1, 2016, must file Form HS-122 Homestead Declaration. Eligible homeowners may make a 2016 Property Tax Adjustment Claim. The claim will be based on the value of the parcel as of April 1, 2015.

VT SCHOOL DISTRICT CODES

Homeowners: For Form IN-111, use the school district code where you owned a home and resided last Dec. 31. For Form HS-122, use the school district code where you own a home and reside on April 1 this year.

Renters: Use the school district code where you rented last Dec. 31. Check with your landlord or local school officials if you are not sure which code to use. Enter the school district code on Form IN-111 (if you are required to file that form) and Form PR-141.

Nonresidents: Enter 999 for the school district code on Form IN-111.

VT SCHOOL CODE	SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME
001	ADDISON
002	ALBANY
003	ALBURGH
004	ANDOVER
005	ARLINGTON
006	ATHENS
255	AVERILL
256	AVERY'S GORE
007	BAKERSFIELD
008	BALTIMORE
009	BARNARD
010	BARNET
011	BARRE CITY
012	BARRE TOWN
013	BARTON
014	BELVIDERE
015	BENNINGTON
016	BENSON
017	BERKSHIRE
018	BERLIN
019	BETHEL
020	BLOOMFIELD
021	BOLTON
022	BRADFORD
023	BRAINTREE
024	BRANDON
025	BRATTLEBORO
026	BRIDGEWATER
027	BRIDPORT
028	BRIGHTON
029	BRISTOL
030	BROOKFIELD
031	BROOKLINE
032	BROWNINGTON
033	BRUNSWICK
252	BUEL'S GORE
034	BURKE
035	BURLINGTON
036	CABOT
037	CALAIS
038	CAMBRIDGE
039	CANAAN
040	CASTLETON
041	CAVENDISH
042	CHARLESTON
043	CHARLOTTE
044	CHELSEA
045	CHESTER
046	CHITTENDEN
047	CLARENDON
048	COLCHESTER
049	CONCORD
050	CORINTH
051	CORNWALL
052	COVENTRY
053	CRAFTSBURY
054	DANBY
055	DANVILLE
056	DERBY
057	DORSET
058	DOVER
059	DUMMERSTON
060	DUXBURY
061	EAST HAVEN
062	EAST MONTPELIER
063	EDEN

VT SCHOOL CODE	SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME
064	ELMORE
065	ENOSBURG
066	ESSEX JUNCTION
067	ESSEX TOWN
070	FAIR HAVEN
068	FAIRFAX
069	FAIRFIELD
071	FAIRLEE
072	FAYSTON
257	FERDINAND
073	FERRISBURGH
074	FLETCHER
075	FRANKLIN
076	GEORGIA
258	GLASTENBURY
077	GLOVER
078	GOSHEN
079	GRAFTON
080	GRANBY
081	GRAND ISLE
082	GRANVILLE
083	GREENSBORO
084	GROTON
085	GUILDHALL
086	GUILFORD
087	HALIFAX
088	HANCOCK
089	HARDWICK
090	HARTFORD
091	HARTLAND
092	HIGHGATE
093	HINESBURG
094	HOLLAND
095	HUBBARDTON
096	HUNTINGTON
097	HYDE PARK
098	IRA
099	IRASBURG
100	ISLE LA MOTTE
101	JAMAICA
102	JAY
103	JERICO
253	JERICO ID
104	JOHNSON
185	KILLINGTON
105	KIRBY
106	LANDGROVE
107	LEICESTER
108	LEMINGTON
259	LEWIS
109	LINCOLN
110	LONDONDERRY
111	LOWELL
112	LUDLOW
113	LUNENBURG
114	LYNDON
115	MAIDSTONE
116	MANCHESTER
117	MARLBORO
118	MARSHFIELD
119	MENDON
120	MIDDLEBURY
121	MIDDLESEX
122	MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS
123	MILTON
124	MONKTON

VT SCHOOL CODE	SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME
125	MONTGOMERY
126	MONTPELIER
127	MORETOWN
128	MORGAN
129	MORRISTOWN
130	MOUNT HOLLY
131	MOUNT TABOR
135	NEW HAVEN
132	NEWARK
133	NEWBURY
134	NEWFANE
136	NEWPORT CITY
137	NEWPORT TOWN
138	NORTH BENNINGTON ID
140	NORTH HERO
139	NORTHFIELD
141	NORTON
142	NORWICH
143	ORANGE
144	ORLEANS
145	ORWELL
146	PANTON
147	PAWLET
148	PEACHAM
149	PERU
150	PITTSFIELD
151	PITTSFORD
152	PLAINFIELD
153	PLYMOUTH
154	POMFRET
155	POULTNEY
156	POWNAI
157	PROCTOR
158	PUTNEY
159	RANDOLPH
160	READING
161	READSBORO
162	RICHFORD
163	RICHMOND
164	RIPTON
165	ROCHESTER
166	ROCKINGHAM
167	ROXBURY
168	ROYALTON
169	RUPERT
170	RUTLAND CITY
171	RUTLAND TOWN
172	RYEGATE
173	SAINT ALBANS CITY
174	SAINT ALBANS TOWN
175	SAINT GEORGE
176	SAINT JOHNSBURY
177	SALISBURY
178	SANDGATE
179	SEARSBURG
180	SHAFTSBURY
254	SHAFTSBURY ID
181	SHARON
182	SHEFFIELD
183	SHELBURNE
184	SHELDON
186	SHOREHAM
187	SHREWSBURY
260	SOMERSET
188	SOUTH BURLINGTON
189	SOUTH HERO

VT SCHOOL CODE	SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME
190	SPRINGFIELD
191	STAMFORD
192	STANNARD
193	STARKSBORO
194	STOCKBRIDGE
195	STOWE
196	STRAFFORD
197	STRATTON
198	SUDBURY
199	SUNDERLAND
200	SUTTON
201	SWANTON
202	THETFORD
203	TINMOUTH
204	TOPSHAM
205	TOWNSHEND
206	TROY
207	TUNBRIDGE
208	UNDERHILL ID
209	UNDERHILL TOWN
210	VERGENNES
211	VERNON
212	VERSHIRE
213	VICTORY
214	WAITSFIELD
215	WALDEN
216	WALLINGFORD
217	WALTHAM
218	WARDSBORO
261	WARNER'S GRANT
219	WARREN
262	WARREN'S GORE
220	WASHINGTON
221	WATERBURY
222	WATERFORD
223	WATERVILLE
224	WEATHERSFIELD
225	WELLS
226	WELLS RIVER
227	WEST FAIRLEE
230	WEST HAVEN
234	WEST RUTLAND
235	WEST WINDSOR
228	WESTFIELD
229	WESTFORD
231	WESTMINSTER
232	WESTMORE
233	WESTON
236	WEYBRIDGE
237	WHEELOCK
238	WHITING
239	WHITINGHAM
240	WILLIAMSTOWN
241	WILLISTON
242	WILMINGTON
243	WINDHAM
244	WINDSOR
245	WINHALL
246	WINOOSKI
247	WOLCOTT
248	WOODBURY
249	WOODFORD
250	WOODSTOCK
251	WORCESTER

Taxpayer Assistance

Visit our new website at www.tax.vermont.gov to find the following:

- Income tax forms and schedules as fillable PDFs
- Electronic payment options through VTPay
- Links to Free File vendors for eligible taxpayers
- Status of your tax return or refund
- Status of your homestead declaration, property tax adjustment, or renter rebate
- Information and resources to help you file your taxes

Important Note: In order to give staff more time to focus on processing returns and refunds, the Taxpayer Services Division will continue to not take calls on Wednesdays. All other divisions are available by telephone.

Call or visit us with your questions

Business hours: Mon-Fri, 7:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Phone: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, 802-828-2865 or 866-828-2865 (toll-free)

Address: 133 State Street (second floor), Montpelier

Be on Guard against Identity Theft and Tax Scams

You should be aware of identity theft, tax refund fraud, and similar tax scams that are targeting taxpayers in Vermont. Taxpayers have reported emails and phone calls from people posing as Department employees who falsely claim taxes are owed and demand immediate payment. The Department has detected and stopped more than \$1 million in attempted tax refund fraud in 2015.

To protect yourself from becoming a victim, you should:

- Never give out personal information unless you are sure of the identity of the person requesting it. If you suspect that an email or phone call is fraudulent, do not engage in conversation. Contact the Department at the phone number listed above to verify an email or phone call.
- Report suspected fraud immediately to the Department and to the IRS. Information about how to report fraud is available on the Department website at www.bit.ly/idtheftfraud and the IRS website at www.irs.gov.

Taxpayer Advocate

The Vermont Department of Taxes offers free, confidential service when a taxpayer encounters difficulty resolving tax issues. The Taxpayer Advocate may be able to help if:

- You are experiencing extreme economic hardship from the Department's action, or
- It is taking more than 180 days to resolve your tax issue, or
- You have not received a response or resolution to the problem by the date promised by the Vermont Department of Taxes

The Taxpayer Advocate will review your situation, help you understand what needs to be done to resolve it, and keep you updated on the progress of your situation. Please note that the Taxpayer Advocate cannot override the provisions of the law or represent taxpayers at Department hearings.

To contact the Taxpayer Advocate:

Telephone: 802-828-6848

Fax: 802-828-2701

Email: tax.taxpayeradvocate@vermont.gov

Mail: ATTN: Taxpayer Advocate

Vermont Department of Taxes

133 State Street

Montpelier, VT 05633-1401