



State of New Jersey

Department of the Treasury

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Homestead Benefit, Senior Freeze Deadlines Fast Approaching

TRENTON – The final deadline for applying for the Homestead Benefit and the Senior Freeze property tax relief programs is Oct. 31, and state Treasurer Andrew Sidamon-Eristoff is urging homeowners who meet eligibility requirements to apply before the month is out.

“Funding for both programs has grown this year, and it’s imperative that taxpayers apply in time to take advantage of these expanded benefits,” the Treasurer said.

The average Senior Freeze payment this year is estimated at \$1,152.59, and more seniors are able to receive the benefit than last year. Hands-on management of resources allowed Governor Chris Christie to sign off on a budget that greatly expanded eligibility compared to Fiscal 2011. The average Homestead credit is estimated at \$475, double last year’s figure.

“No one should miss out on these valuable benefits if they are eligible, so I urge every potentially qualified taxpayer to get their applications in before Oct. 31,” Eristoff said.

To be eligible for the Homestead Benefit, you must have owned and occupied a home in New Jersey that was your principal residence as of Oct. 1, 2010. In addition, you must have had property taxes which were due and paid on the property during 2010, and you must have earned \$150,000 or less in 2010 if you were age 65 or older or blind or disabled, and \$75,000 or less in 2010 if you were under age 65 and not blind or disabled. Homeowners who meet the eligibility requirements will receive a credit on their February tax bills based on property taxes paid in 2010.

Residents who do not have an application or who need assistance can call the Homestead Benefit Hotline (1-888-238-1233) between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Homeowners who qualify will receive their Homestead Benefit as a credit on their February 2012 property tax bill. After January 1, 2012, these homeowners can expect to receive a revised property tax bill or an advice copy from their tax collector that reflects the amount of the credit.

The Division of Taxation began mailing Property Tax Reimbursement (Senior Freeze) applications in February, and most eligible citizens have already filed. Those who haven't still have ample time to take advantage of the opportunity to freeze their property tax bills.

Eligible homeowners who have not yet filed can do so until Oct. 31 either online at www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/ or by phone (1-877-658-2972) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Property Tax Reimbursement (Senior Freeze) applicants can call the Property Tax Reimbursement Hotline at 1-800-882-6597 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays to speak to a Taxation representative for assistance, to get information on the status of their reimbursement checks if they have already filed, or to request an application.

Information about the Homestead Benefit and Senior Freeze programs, as well as other New Jersey property tax relief programs, is available on the Division of Taxation's Web site at www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/relief.shtml.